



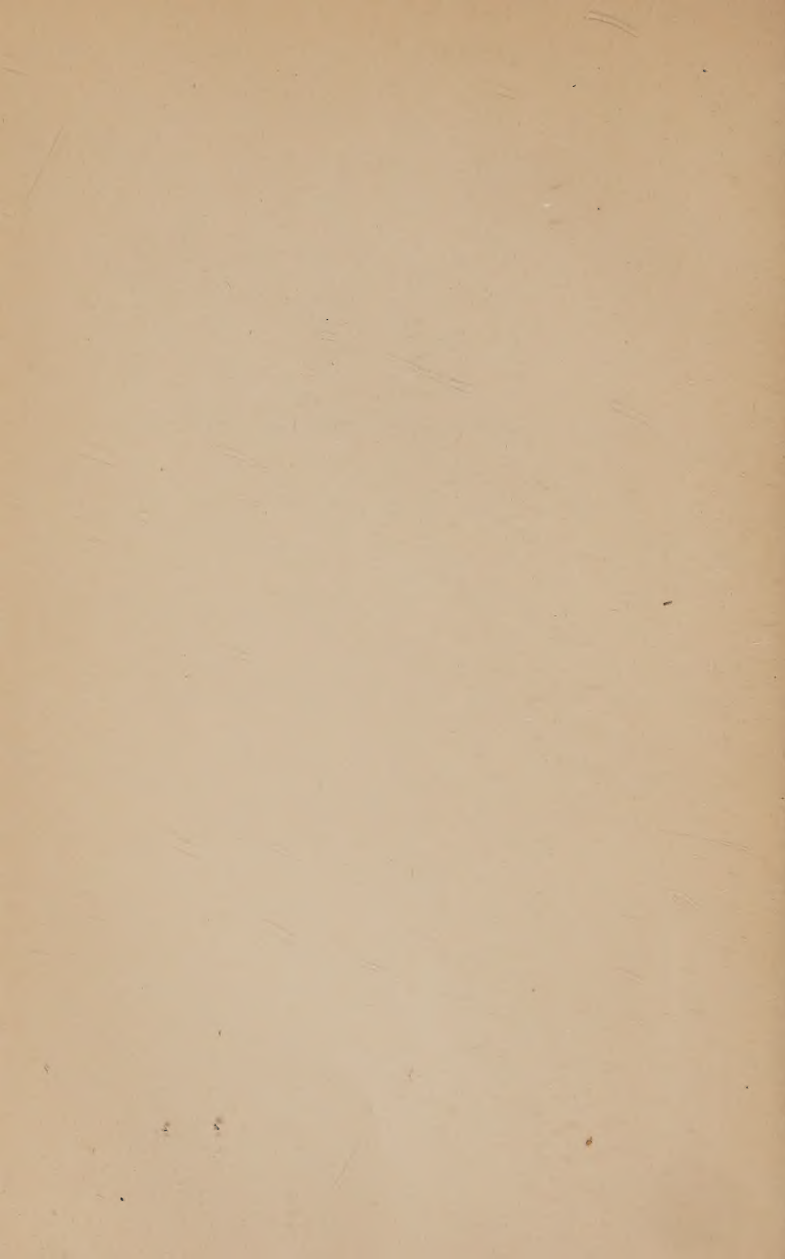
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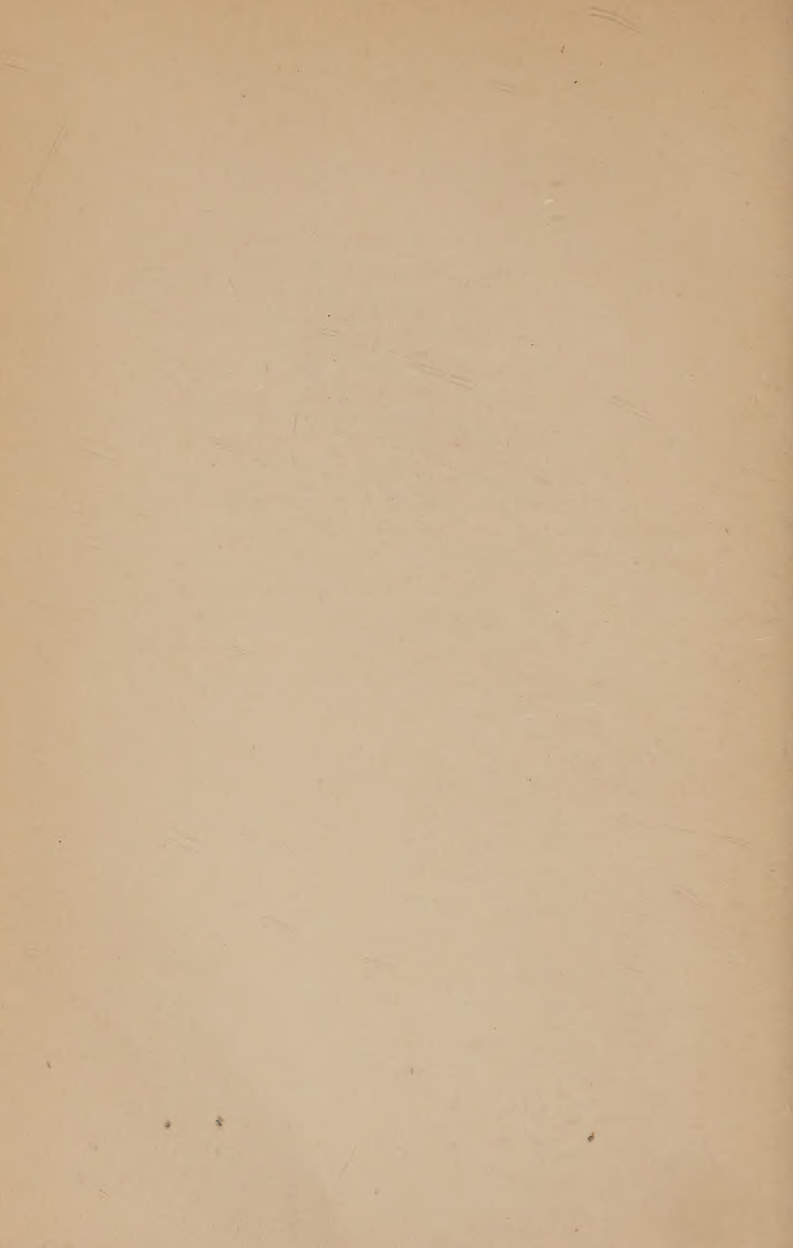


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OUR EUROPEAN
NEIGHBOURS

EDITED BY
WILLIAM HARBUTT DAWSON

SWISS LIFE IN TOWN AND
COUNTRY



COWHERD ON HIS WAY TO THE SUMMER PASTURES

SWISS LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY & &

BY ALFRED THOMAS STORY

AUTHOR OF

"THE BUILDING OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
SWITZERLAND AND THE SWISS	I

CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE WITH NATURE	12
------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER III

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE	29
---	----

CHAPTER IV

THE GEMEINDEN AND THE LANDSGEMEINDEN .	46
--	----

CHAPTER V

PUBLIC EDUCATION	61
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER VI

PHILANTHROPIC WORK	78
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VII

NATIONAL INDUSTRY	93
-----------------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII

THE CULTURE OF THE VINE	106
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IX

LIFE AND WORK IN THE ALPS	117
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER X		PAGE
CANTONAL LIFE AND CHARACTER . . .		131
CHAPTER XI		
SWISS WOMEN AND SWISS HOMES . . .		152
CHAPTER XII		
SWISS CHILDREN		173
CHAPTER XIII		
MILITARY SYSTEM		184
CHAPTER XIV		
WORKINGMEN'S SOCIETIES AND CO-OPERATION .		194
CHAPTER XV		
RELIGIOUS LIFE AND INFLUENCES . . .		208
CHAPTER XVI		
POPULAR FÊTES AND FESTIVALS		221
CHAPTER XVII		
LITERATURE AND THE PRESS		243
CHAPTER XVIII		
TYPES AND CHARACTERS		257
INDEX		273





ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
COWHERD ON HIS WAY TO THE SUMMER PASTURES	
<i>Frontispiece</i>	
A FARMHOUSE IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND	14
GALLERY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS	26
FEMALE COSTUME, THURGAU	48
A WOMAN OF APPENZELL AT HER EMBROIDERY FRAME	48
HERDSMAN OF APPENZELL-INNER-RHODEN	58
SWISS SCHOOL-CHILDREN	62
A BASEL WOMAN AT WORK	82
A GRAPE-GATHERER OF VAUD	112
A WOMAN OF THE CANTON OF BERNE	112
IN THE SUMMER PASTURES	128
COSTUME OF CANTON SCHWYZ	146
TESSIN WOMAN	146
A SWISS MILKMAN	180

	PAGE
SWISS SOLDIERS PREPARING TO CAMP . . .	188
A WOMAN OF UNTERWALDEN . . .	204
A WOMAN OF CANTON ST. GALL . . .	204
A SWISS HOUSE	230
SUMMER PASTURES IN THE MOUNTAINS . .	250
SWISS GUIDES	258



SWISS LIFE IN TOWN AND
COUNTRY



SWISS LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

CHAPTER I

SWITZERLAND AND THE SWISS

VERY different are the thoughts and emotions called up by the word "Switzerland" in the minds of different people. To the tourist, passing more or less rapidly through the country, it is one thing — a tour amid the grandiose and picturesque, an ever-changing panorama, perhaps a hurry and a scurry from one scene of interest or beauty to another, not unmixed in the end with utter languor and fatigue. To the one, however, who has chanced to pitch his tent in Switzerland for a season, who has lived the life of the people, and known it in all its lights and shadows, how different to him is the impression aroused by the sight or sound of the name!

It may be that the first image thereby evoked is one of mountains, white and shining in the

eternity of their snows, or of lakes blue as *lapis lazuli* set in frames of dazzling emerald. But it is soon followed by pictures and reverberations of a life varied as a kaleidoscope, and yet withal simple and sincere as perhaps can anywhere be found in this modern world of ours. That to me is the note of Swiss life—its simplicity and its sincerity. The same characteristics are to be met with, of course, in other countries and amongst other peoples; but I know of no people in whom one finds the same qualities so generally distributed and of so marked a type. Those whose acquaintance with the country has been derived only from living in hotels, thus coming in contact mainly with hotel-keepers and their *entourage*, may find a difficulty in accepting this view of the Swiss; for in Switzerland, as elsewhere, hotel-keepers are always human, and not unfrequently extortionate. They do not always “live up to the beauty of their mountains,” as an American lady once remarked to me, which is no doubt a sad fault; but it may be said of others besides the Swiss that they do not uniformly show themselves at their best.

In the case of the Swiss the contrast is more apparent than real. Their mountains are so magnificent—everything in their midst in the realm of nature is pitched, as it were, in so high a key—that man appears to be dwarfed. But if, on the one hand, beauty of scenery and grandeur of prospect are on so lavish a scale, on the other hand

the presence of those very features in such majesty and abundance tends to the impoverishment of the country in respect to the first essentials of life. Men cannot live on towering peaks, on snow-clad mountain-ranges, on glittering pinnacles of chrysoprase and amethyst. Such things may lend a charm to life, and tend to enlarge the soul, but neither their charm nor their moral influence can be felt where life is reduced to a sordid and never-ending struggle for the mere wherewithal to keep body and soul together. That such is the condition of life in many parts of Switzerland those who really know the country are well aware. Fortunate is it that the same conditions do not obtain in all the cantons. In some the soil is more generous, and life is in consequence easier; but, taken at its best, Switzerland is a poor country, and though it may exploit its scenery and its charms, the wealth it attracts by such means does not make up for its poverty of natural resources, as compared with other and even adjacent countries.

As is the case with most other nationalities, the Swiss are not a homogeneous people. When Cæsar invaded the country it was inhabited chiefly by two tribes, known as the Rhæti and the Helvetii. They were of Celtic origin, and such was the indomitable opposition the latter in especial gave to their Roman foes, that they became so decimated as never again to be in a position to raise their heads as a separate people. The

Romans remained for over three hundred years in the country, and doubtless left their permanent mark upon the population of the land, as well as upon its arts and customs. They at least introduced the vine, and its cultivation has ever since been one of the leading features of Swiss industry. As the Empire began to totter to its fall, Helvetia was overrun by hordes of Alemanni and Burgundians, who thenceforward became the permanent occupiers of the land. The former appear to have been the sturdier and fiercer people, and probably it was they who gave those tougher and more enduring elements to the character which we associate with the Swiss to the present time. They preserved their ancient tongue, while the Burgundians, a milder race, adopted the language of the conquered people. Hence it arose that we have to-day the two broadly defined limits of the German- and the French-speaking cantons, or districts, for the dividing line does not always coincide with cantonal boundaries.

French and German are not, however, the only languages spoken by the Swiss. In the canton of Tessin (or Ticino, from the river of that name flowing through it) Italian is spoken; while in parts of the Grisons (or Graubünden) another offshoot of the ancient Latin tongue, called the Romansch, is spoken. According to the most recent estimate, 71.3 per cent. of the people speak German, 21.4 per cent. speak French, 5.6 per cent. speak Italian, and 1.4 per cent. Romansch, the

remaining 0.4 per cent. speaking other tongues. The German language is spoken in the middle, the north, and east of Switzerland; that is, in the four Forest Cantons, in Soleure, Aargau, Basel, Zurich, Thurgau, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, Appenzell, and Glarus, in five sixths of Berne, in the eastern part of Freiburg, the north-east of Graubünden, and in parts of the Italian districts which in early times were conquered and held in subjection by the people of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden. French is spoken in Neuchâtel, Vaud, Geneva, and Lower Valais, in the greater part of the canton of Freiburg, and in the Bernese Jura. Italian is spoken in Tessin and in those parts of the Grisons bordering upon the Po. Romansch is confined to the Grisons, where even several newspapers are printed in that tongue. Romansch is one of those languages which, after the disruption of the Roman Empire, became gradually differentiated from the Latin. It was at one time the common speech of the Old Roman province of Rhætia, which included the districts wherein it is now spoken, the Tyrol, and the contiguous parts of Switzerland and South Germany. The comparative inaccessibility of the district in which it still lingers will account for its having continued to exist there long after its disappearance from the neighbouring regions.

Taking them as a whole, the Swiss are a strong and healthy race of men, although in many districts the unfavourable influence of the factory,

and still more that of alcohol, have made themselves felt. Goitre and cretinism, too, are unfortunately very prevalent in some parts, although not to the alarming extent which was formerly the case. Goitre is more common among the women than among the men, especially on the northern side of the Alps. In the canton of Valais it is extremely prevalent, and a few years ago it was rare to see a woman who did not bear the marks of it in the form of what in Derbyshire, from its prevalence there, is known as the "Derbyshire neck." But though the swelling is elsewhere regarded as a great disfigurement, here it was looked upon as, in a sort, a beauty trait, and those who had not got it were laughed at as being "goose-necked." On the southern side of the Alps the Val d'Aosta is noted for its goitrous subjects. At Domo d'Ossola the men are said to be the chief sufferers. The disease, however, is much less common than it was, thanks, in part, to the care which the French have taken to remedy the evil in the neighbouring parts of Savoy, but in part also to the very great attention which has of late years been given to matters of hygiene in Switzerland.

Cretinism also appears to be on the decrease. It used to be very prevalent in certain districts, especially in the lower lands and vales in which goitre was common. In those parts it was at one time extremely painful for visitors to see so many of these congenital idiots sprawling about and

often begging by the wayside. They are not now so conspicuous as formerly, partly because there are more institutions for their reception, and also because the evil is not so common as it was a generation or two ago. Frequent intermarriage in the same family is held to be the most fruitful cause of cretinism; but one can have very little doubt that intemperance also has much to do with the curse, especially when we learn that, while scarlet fever and typhoid combined carry off no more than 339 victims a year throughout Switzerland, alcohol in the form of wine and beer alone is accountable, directly or indirectly, for 465 deaths. These scourges apart, however, the Swiss are, as a rule, well built and remarkably tough of fibre, especially those engaged in agriculture. The average length of life is 40.6 years, and the proportion of males to females is 49 per cent. to 51. For myself, having spent a very considerable time in the country, and having been brought into intimate touch with the people, both as regards their social and their political life, I conceived the very highest respect, and even admiration, for them, and that not only for what they have been, but for what they are. They form a unique people, and may truly be said to have as their home a unique country.

Switzerland forms one of the smallest states of Europe, being little more than half the size of Scotland, and is almost the only one whose history is the history of its people. It is the centre of its

grandest natural scenery, the birthplace of four of its best-known and most considerable rivers, and has for centuries enjoyed the special distinction of being the home of democracy and freedom. The name is derived from that of one of its smallest cantons, Schwyz, the inhabitants of which took a leading part in the emancipation of the country from the Austrian yoke in the early part of the fourteenth century. The country is enclosed on the north by Germany, on the east by Austria, on the south by Italy and France, and on the west by France. Its northern border is defined generally by the Rhine and the Lake of Constance; its eastern by the Rhine and the diverging ranges of the Alps; the southern limit of the country is marked by the grand chain of the High Alps, embracing the Pennine, the Lapontine, and the Rhætian divisions; and the western by the Doubs and the ridges of the Jura. Between these boundaries lies the irregular oval-shaped area of Switzerland, whose length from east to west, reckoning from Piz Ciavalatch (in the Grisons) to Nant de Vosogne (Geneva), is a little more than two hundred miles, its greatest breadth from north to south (Oberbargen, Schaffhausen, to Pedrinate, Tessin) being one hundred and fifty-six miles. The total area of the country comprises 15,981 square miles, of which three fourths may be said to drain into the basin of the Rhine (including its tributary the Aar), one sixth into that of the Rhone, one twelfth into that of the Po (through

the Ticino), and one twenty-secondth part into that of the Danube (through the Inn).

Rarely is such a variety of life and of manners, and hence of character, found in so small an area. On the one side we have in Geneva a city and a population that resembles Paris of to-day in its brightness, its *esprit*, and Athens of old in its culture and democracy. Near-lying Lausanne is like nothing but itself, a city flourishing because of the youth and beauty it attracts within its walls. According to its size, the capital of Vaud has perhaps the largest foreign population of any town in Switzerland—drawn thither in the main because of the exceptional facilities it affords for the education of the young in all branches of study. Hundreds of young people from all parts of the world throng its various educational institutions, giving to the old city an aspect of youth and gaiety that is not easily forgotten.

From these western cities to Schaffhausen is not a far cry; but to be transported from the shores of Lake Lemman to the quaint old streets of the Rhine city is, on the first view, like getting a peep into mediæval times, especially if, towards the close of an October day, one sees the heavy drays, laden with casks that shed around a fragrance of new wine, draw up in front of quaintly gabled and antiquely frescoed houses, into whose dark though pleasantly dreamful cellars they discharge their bounteous vats.

Different, again, almost as night from day, is the

life presented to us if we cross the St. Gothard and drop down into poor, though beautiful, Tessin, with its vine-clad slopes and its groves of century-old chestnuts, bounteous in the shade they afford and the food they yield to the hard-working peasantry. They have a proverb to the effect that "so many flies as summer produces, so many chestnuts will there be in the year's harvest." Hard is it for the poor toilers if, according to this saying, the flies fail, since so large a proportion of their food comes from the chestnut tree. The fruit is eaten both boiled or *brasch*—that is, roasted on the gridiron. The gathering of the chestnuts takes place in October, and is usually a gay time for the peasant and his family, all joining in the work and sport.

Travel through the country from Basel to Lugano, from Geneva to the Grisons; study the annals of the country from the earliest time to the present day, and no one will wonder at the variety of type and character that is to be found within its borders, or at the contrasts of political and social life which it presents on every side. This contrast is everywhere the most marked feature. Life amid the Higher Alps is very different from that in the lower plains and valleys, or in the specially characteristic *Voralpen*. Amid the snowy peaks, by the side of the yellow, rolling glacier-streams, where the green pastures stretch upwards from the vales below to meet them, here are found numberless little hamlets and lonely dwellings,

the homes of lowly herdsmen and mountaineers. Though these people, as has been well said, have their joys and their delights, they are attuned to a soberer measure than those of the dwellers in the Lower Alps. Amid the perilous heights of the great central mountains the joyful song that may be heard lower down is apt to give place to a prayer that house and all that is most dear to the heart may not in the night be swallowed up by the awful avalanche or the still more terrible landslip :

“ Look kindly down when we are sunk in sleep,
And guard our roof ! ”





CHAPTER II

THE STRUGGLE WITH NATURE

I HAVE said that amid the Higher Alps life becomes subdued to a perpetual supplication. Man in those sublime regions, where Nature in her most terrific moods is, as it were, mingled with his daily toil, feels, as perhaps nowhere else, how puny he is and how helpless. It is man's task everywhere to subdue the earth, to make it amenable to his hands; but, despite all his toils, its ancient savagery remains, and ever and anon, even where most under subjection, it breaks out in revolt and, as with a mock at human art, spreads devastation and ruin on every side. If this be the case in other lands, how much more so in Switzerland! There the eternal struggle is never for a moment intermitted. Even when Nature is the most seductive and enticing, she is the most to be feared. The sun may be shining in beauty upon the "heaven-kissing" peaks, transforming them into images the most elevating and refining; but while it is doing so it may be setting loose the terrific avalanche, or it may be preparing for the downpour of a devastating flood.

Few who have not lived in the country know how much the life of the people is mixed up with these disasters, how much their history is a record of such disasters, or of efforts to prevent or minimise their effects. Even as I write a newspaper reaches me in which it is stated that in consequence of the threatening aspect of a mountain above Schwanden, near the Lake of Brienz, in the Bernese Oberland, the people of that hamlet had been ordered by the local authorities to quit their dwellings and remove to safer quarters. Barely had they done so before a huge mass of rock became detached from an overhanging peak, and leapt with a roar as of thunder down the mountain side. Many are the villages that have, even within living memory, been swept wholly or in part to destruction by such catastrophes, while the total number of villages that have been thus overwhelmed is beyond count.

Sometimes the visitation takes the form of an avalanche, sometimes of a landslide. Accumulating in immense quantities in the upper regions, the snowy masses become detached from the steep declivities by their own weight, or are loosened by the solar heat, and thence descend, acquiring greater dimensions and increased speed as they go, until finally brought to rest in the subjacent valleys. The fearful uproar which accompanies their downfall is often heard at a distance of several leagues.

The natives of the Alpine regions distinguish

between several kinds of avalanche, or *Lawine*, as the phenomenon is called in the German tongue. The *Staublawine*, or dust avalanche, is formed of the light surface snow, recently fallen, which, when once set in motion, quickly increases in quantity and in the velocity of its fall, until, light as dust though it be in its particles, it becomes irresistible in its might, and practically carries everything before it. Such avalanches have been known to sweep through miles of country before their force has been finally spent. Entire forests are sometimes destroyed by the fury of their impact, though these forests are, as a rule, regarded as the best protection against them, and are now cared for and cultivated for that especial purpose.

Besides the *Staub* there is the *Schleich* (or slide) avalanche, and the *Schlaglawine* (*Schlag* meaning a heavy stroke or blow). They indicate but different forms of the same thing. A sliding avalanche may at any moment be transformed from its slowly slipping, almost imperceptible motion, into one of great velocity. Suddenly the moving mass will break up into detached portions, which will leap down the mountainside with a roar as of thunder. Rocks are crushed into fragments by these rushing masses, trees are torn up by their roots, the beds of streams are filled up, whereby floods are occasioned, and houses, sheds, refuges, even whole villages, are sometimes buried beneath them.

The *Grundlawine* is somewhat similar to the



A FARMHOUSE IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND

last-named; although it is, so to speak, more of the "set-piece" order, occurring in the spring during the months of April and May, when the sun is becoming powerful, and the ground, accumulating heat, thaws the under side of the snow. This kind of avalanche is apt to be more dangerous in its effects than the others, because the snow, being more compact, and in consequence heavier, holds what it covers in a more fatal embrace. Human beings, and even cattle, overtaken and buried beneath a *Staublawine* are often able to free themselves from the superincumbent mass, or, if they cannot do that, they have been known to live for some hours under their white shroud, because, as the air penetrates the light snow, they are enabled to breathe in spite of its thick covering.

Not so with those overwhelmed by a *Grundlawine*, in which case the snow is so hardened and solidified by the fall that anyone buried beneath it stands the chance of being either crushed or suffocated at once. There is little likelihood of such unfortunates coming out alive, unless others hasten quickly to their rescue. Fortunately, these avalanches have usually a fixed time for descending, and those who live in their vicinity take precautions to avoid them. In some districts the fall of these avalanches is as regular in the spring time as April showers are with us, and they are hailed with almost as much satisfaction by the mountain herdsmen, who know that when

they have fallen the upland pastures will soon be open.

Of the whole of the productive land of Switzerland—71.7 of the total area—some 19.2 per cent. consists of what is known as alp-land or meadow, and until the snows begin to break up in the fourth or fifth month, these lands are practically closed against all husbandry operations. Timber to some extent may be cut, and some hunting may be done, but that is all. The hunting is very precarious, and hardly worth counting. Game is not abundant in any part of Switzerland. In past times there was so much indiscriminate shooting that very little was left to shoot. In some parts it became a rarity to see a bird, to say nothing of game. Rigorous game laws and other devices have, however, been adopted with a view to increasing the number of wild creatures. Chamois is most abundant in Graubünden, Glarus, Berne, and Freiburg. The marmot and the Alpine hare may still be seen upon the higher meadows, and they bid fair, under the existing protective system, to increase. But it will still be years, even with the greatest indulgence on the part of the Central Government, before anything like a plenitude of animal or bird life can be witnessed in the Alpine districts. This, of course, is in great part owing to the rigour of the winter season, which makes the struggle for existence as severe for the lower animals as for man.

Great precautions are taken to prevent acci-

dents from avalanches; but never a year passes without one or more catastrophes of the kind, claiming its tale of victims. It is much the same as the losses from storm and shipwreck with us. Certain persons—carriers, muleteers, and labourers who travel from canton to canton for work—are obliged to venture through the passes before the spring avalanches have descended. As a rule, they travel with caution, going in small parties, often in single file, so that if one be overwhelmed the others may be at hand to render assistance. But too often, notwithstanding every precaution, not only individuals, but whole parties are thus swept to destruction. In the early part of May in the present year a company of eight Italian workmen, who were making their way over one of the passes into Graubünden, were thus surprised by an avalanche and buried. A number of frontier guards hurried to their rescue, but were too late to be of any service.

The great danger from avalanches is when they come at an unexpected time, or, what is perhaps worse, when, from some unforeseen cause, they overstep their usual bounds, and, descending upon cultivated acres and villages, spread destruction on every side. There are certain parts of the Alpine regions that are never wholly free from the possibility of such occurrences. Even in the calmest summer days the thunder of one may be heard, and the quiet herdsmen, turning whence the sound comes, will behold a huge

■

sliding mass coming down from the neighbouring mountain.

They are not always dangerous, however, and the inhabitants protect themselves from the risk as much as they can by building great walls and redoubts on the exposed sides of their villages and houses. These are usually constructed with an angle towards the mountains, much like the upstream buttresses of bridges, with the object of breaking the fall of the snow and turning it aside. It is the necessity of these and similar works that has made of the Swiss such expert engineers. Everywhere, and in the most unexpected places, one meets with erections almost cyclopean, built not for defence against human foes, but to protect life and property from the more relentless force of nature, as well as to overcome its obstructions.

To the same end is care devoted to the preservation, and even the restoration, of the Alpine forests. There was a time, and that not a century ago, when little thought was given to such matters. Forests were allowed to be used, cut down for firing, or for any other purpose, and no one ever gave a thought to planting young trees in their place. But gradually it came to be perceived that this was inviting disaster, not only from avalanches, but from other causes, and the Confederation was empowered to take this matter of the forests under its own special supervision. Now, not only is the greatest care taken of all woodlands, but there is a regular system of re-

afforestation, with a school of forestry, supported by the Federal Government, equal probably to any in Europe.

This school is connected with the Federal Polytechnic at Zurich, and attached to it is a central station of experimental forestry. All inspectors and others connected with the department of woods and forests have to pass through this school and to be approved by the central authorities before they can be appointed by the cantons, under whose direction they work. For it is the duty of the cantonal governments to keep each its own forests in good condition, the Confederation reimbursing them for outlay up to from fifty to seventy-five per cent. of the total expense incurred. A recent Federal budget provided for an expenditure of sixty thousand francs (\$12,000) in the form of subsidies for the reafforesting of the higher mountains—cost and labour well expended, not only as an insurance against the avalanche, but for the beautifying of the country.

One of the most striking things connected with the descent of an avalanche is the disturbance of the air which it occasions, amounting at times to the force of a hurricane, and doing not unfrequently an immensity of mischief. The phenomenon is often likened to what is called the wind of a cannon-ball. The cause is essentially the same, though there is no comparison as regards their respective effects, the blast of an avalanche being very often felt at great distances from its

actual line of descent. A vine-dresser of Valais told me that as he once stood on a neighbouring height he saw an avalanche fall on the opposite side of the narrow vale, and as he gazed, unconscious of any danger, suddenly a gust of wind struck him, and, lifting him quite off his feet, dropped him amongst his vines some yards distant. This, of course, was a small affair in comparison with the wind raised by a glacier-fall—another form of avalanche—which occurred in the Visp Valley early in the last century, whereby many houses in the village of Randa were completely destroyed.

The *Gletscherlawine*, or glacier avalanche, in which a portion of a glacier that, approaching a steep incline, breaks off and descends with the roar of thunder and the force of a tornado into the valleys below, destroying everything that comes in its way, is still more dreadful than the snow avalanche. Among the more notable catastrophes of the kind may be named the glacier avalanche which overwhelmed Bagnethal in the year 1818, and Nikolaithal, near Zermatt, in 1819, as also the destruction of the Alpine pastures on the Gemmi through the downfall of a glacier from the Altels in the summer of 1897.

One might mention other forms of the avalanche, terrific as those described above, but almost more destructive, like that known as the *Runzen*; but enough has been said under this head to give an idea of what the struggle with

nature is that the Swiss husbandman and mountaineer have constantly to wage in order, as it were, to keep their heads above the flowers.

Nor are these phenomena the worst that have to be contended with; there are others even more dreadful in their effects than avalanches, though fortunately of less frequent occurrence: I refer to landslips. Masses of rock and earth are loosened from position by the action of the elements, and, descending into the vales below, spread death and destruction on every hand. Such a catastrophe was that which overwhelmed the village of Gollau in 1806, or, more recently, that which (in 1881) resulted in the destruction of a large part of the village of Elm, in the canton of Glarus, and the death of one hundred and fourteen of its inhabitants—a terrible visitation for a peaceful Sabbath morning, and one calculated deeply to impress these people of the Alps how doubly true it is with them that in the midst of life they are in death!

Elm is a characteristic Swiss mountain village; it lies at an elevation of 3230 feet above the sea, and has a population of something over a thousand. They and the toilers in surrounding valleys generally are a strong, hardy, and handsome race, particularly the men. Industrious and home-loving, they are proud of their good name, and renowned for their uprightness of principle and good conduct. The education of the young is well cared for. Nor does it stop short of some,

at least, of the ruder accomplishments which characterise many of the Alpine people. Those of Elm and its vicinity are in particular noted for their singing of the popular *Volkslieder* of the country; and for those who have not been spoiled by the conventional airs and jejune words of our modern drawing-room canticles, it is no small treat to hear one of these mountain voices trolling forth the words:

“ Bis die Berge thun sich beugen
Und die Hügel senken sich,
Bis der Tod mir nimmt das Leben,
So lange will ich lieben dich ! ”

The fatal *Bergsturz* which sent one hundred and fourteen of its inhabitants to a living grave overwhelmed also twenty-two dwelling-houses, fifty stables, and twelve stores and workshops. It was estimated at the time that the catastrophe was occasioned by the fall of twenty million tons of rock from a height of two thousand feet. Terrible as was the calamity, it was brightened by acts of the rarest courage and heroism. One incident is particularly worthy of note. A young girl was buried beneath the ruins of a house, and though it seemed hopeless to expect ever to behold the daylight again, yet in the dreadful situation in which she was placed her first care was for a younger child who had been overwhelmed along with her, and who, severely hurt, was for part of the time unconscious. For ten or

twelve hours this lowly heroine was immured in her terrible prison, and throughout the whole of that time she kept heart and hope, and was unremitting in the consolations and encouragement she gave to the little one. Fortunately, in the end, both were rescued, although the younger child survived but a very short time.

Professor Tyndall, the first to achieve the summit of the Weisshorn (in 1861), has given a striking description of a landslip on a small scale which he witnessed while effecting the descent. "A deep, confused roar," he says, "attracted our attention. From a point near the summit a rock had been discharged. It plunged down a dry couloir, raising a cloud of dust at each bump against the mountain. A hundred similar ones were immediately in motion, while the spaces between the larger masses were filled by an innumerable flight of smaller stones. Each of them shakes its quantum of dust in the air, until finally the avalanche is enveloped in a vast cloud. The clatter of this devil's cavalry was stunning. Black masses of rock emerged here and there from the cloud, and sped through the air like flying fiends. Their motion was not one of translation merely, but they whizzed and vibrated in their flight as if urged by wings. The clang of echoes resounded from side to side, from the Schallenberg to the back Weisshorn, until finally the whole troop came to rest, after many a deep-sounding thud in the snow, at the bottom

of the mountain. This stone avalanche was one of the most extraordinary things I had ever witnessed."

Although this is not a work on the physical geography of Switzerland, a few words at least must be devoted to glaciers, which constitute one of the most notable features in the physiognomy of the Alps, and give rise from time to time to some of its most remarkable tragedies. Glaciers are appendages of the snow-covered mountains, and bear much the same relation to them that icicles do to the snow-clad roof of a house. They are formed by the partial thawing of the snow on the higher peaks, followed by subsequent congelation about the variable line which marks the oscillations of the freezing-point, and known among the Alpine people as the *Firn* (in French, *le névé*). The icy product, semi-fluid as it is, flows perforce down the mountain-slope, but at a varying rate of progress, the more rapidly moving glaciers attaining a speed of one hundred metres a year. At the height of sixteen hundred metres above the sea most glaciers cease, though a few here and there descend to a lower level. As cultivation goes on far above the elevation named, the singular spectacle is often exhibited, in the full glory of summer, of enormous fields of ice existing in close proximity to fruitful orchards, smiling vineyards, fields ripening for the harvest, meadows spangled with myriad-hued flowers, and the peaceful hum of bees. These glaciers differ

much in external aspect, but to all alike belongs that general appearance which has been so well described by Coleridge in the lines:

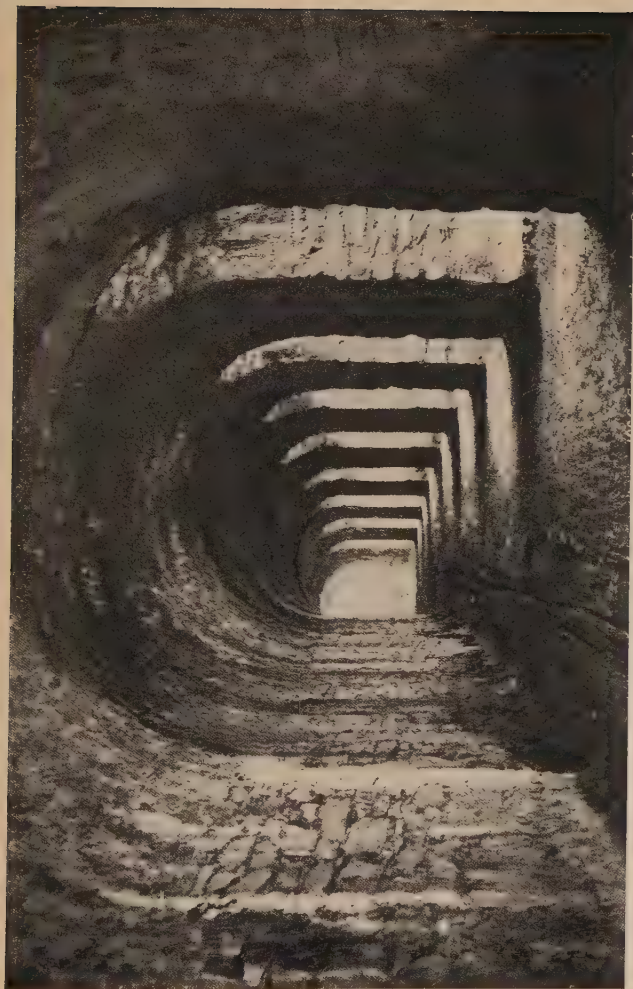
“ Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty Voice,
And stopped at once, amidst their maddest plunge !
Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts ! ”

Mention has been made of the commoner dangers and terrors amongst which the mountain people must ever live, and from which they can never be wholly assured of safety ; but there is one other peril to which some parts of the country are exposed more than others, and which, to many, is fraught with a greater terror than even the mountain flood or the landslip. I refer to the fires caused by lightning. Again and again in this land of nature's havoc-forces whole villages have been destroyed by conflagrations thus occasioned. Over an enclosed valley, perhaps, the thunder-clouds will gather, and, after making the place unbearable with the heat, they will suddenly open, and, with a crash of unutterable dread, envelop the whole vale and mountain side in sheets of livid flame. Then, before the terrified people have had time to recover from the shock and the glare, the cry will go up of “ Fire ! fire ! ” Many an Alpine farmer and vine-grower has thus, in a few minutes, seen his home and everything about it reduced to ashes, and many a mountain village, smiling at noon, has long

ere sunset been reduced to a smoking ruin by the devouring flame from heaven.

The frequent recurrence of such dangers as those above described, and the never-ending struggle with such formidable difficulties, have developed in the Swiss a special instinct for self-preservation and its outcome, engineering. Nowhere can this be seen so well, or on so magnificent a scale, as in the roads he has constructed over the Alpine passes. Surprising works of the kind are noticeable along the gorge of the Aar near Meiringen, where galleries have been bored in part through the solid rock, and in part carried on iron stanchions the whole length of the *Schlucht*, so that visitors may behold the wonder of this piece of nature's handiwork.

This is a fair specimen of what has been done on a much larger scale on many of the mountain roads, in order to make them more practicable. Indeed, but for these surprising works, many of the great highways over the Central Alps, passable now for carriages, would be altogether impossible. For these Swiss road-makers, however, no difficulty has apparently been too great. The traveller over these mountain roads is astonished by feat after feat of the most admirable, the most daring engineering—astonished alike by the genius that conceived them and the patient industry that carried them out. Now it is a bridge which spans with its light arch a yawning chasm, and it may be repeated again and again within



GALLERY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS

the space of less than a mile ; now a tunnel or gallery through the solid rock, where it seemed impossible for the road to proceed ; but the boring-tool and gunpowder have performed miracles, and the way is made plain.

Nothing is forgotten or left to chance in this splendid engineering. If the impending heights threaten snowslide or avalanche, the road is protected by arcades of solid masonry or else by excavations in the rocky wall of the mountain itself. Sometimes the road is carried along the precipitous side of a cliff hundreds of feet in depth over piles of stone-work. For miles it will run overhanging, as it were, the yawning abyss ; yet such is the excellence of these highways that, though they zigzag down the heights, making turns often at apparently most perilous angles, experienced drivers will go pelting down them at a well-nigh breakneck pace. They do not do so, however, except with tried horses ; but with such accessories on a clear day there is nothing so exhilarating as a race down the mountain, opening up a fresh view, a changing panorama, at every turn, and making the nerves tingle with the consciousness of dangers, imminent and obvious, subdued by the pre-eminence of art. Those who have travelled over the Furka will know what this sort of sensation means.

Jean Jacques Rousseau was *surpris que les bains de l'air salulaire et bienfaisant des montagnes ne fussent pas un des grandes remèdes de la*

médecine et de la morale. Swiss engineering has at the present day so overcome the difficulties of mountain-travel, not only by the making of roads, but also by the construction of railways that may be said to walk up the mountains, that thousands of citizens now ascend the peaks to fortify the health of their bodies, if not their *morale*, spending weeks yearly in the hotels built in the mountain-tops or in the high valleys. Thus they bring good out of what was formerly apt to be regarded as unmixed evil.





CHAPTER III

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE

ONE might naturally expect that a people long tutored under such conditions as those which have just been described would develop some striking, if not altogether peculiar, features of character, and such has indeed been the case with the Swiss. They have, through the gradual evolution of the centuries, worked out a political constitution which is in its way quite unique. Although the world has seen, and has still before its eyes, other experiments in democratic government, there is nothing in existence, or to be found in the records of history, at all like what we see in Switzerland. Moreover, the interesting point is—to Englishmen, at least—that the Swiss constitution, like that of Great Britain, has been one of slow and step-by-step growth. Beginning, so to speak, in a single germ, it has, by a method analogous to that witnessed in other organised bodies, gradually developed new powers and differentiated functions, in accordance with the demands of the time and the increasing complexity of modern life.

It is curious to note that the future Swiss Confederation took its rise at the issue of the gorges of the St. Gothard, almost at the very heart, therefore, of the Alpine region. For here is situated the ancient village of Altdorf, still the chief town of the rude people of Uri, who take the bull for the symbol of their strength, and who, along with their neighbours of Schwyz and Unterwalden, with bull-like force and endurance withstood through the centuries every attack upon their homes and pastures, and upon the fires of liberty they had kindled upon their hearthstones. Here, on August 1, 1291, the people of these mountain fastnesses formed a perpetual alliance for the defence of their several local rights and privileges. In 1309, the Forest Cantons, as they are still called, were given, or confirmed in, the *Reichsfreiheit* of the Empire. They were not, however, allowed to enjoy their rights without contest, and on November 15, 1315, in defence of those rights, they met and signally defeated the flower of Austrian chivalry in the famous battle of Morgarten, which has been well named the Marathon of Swiss history. On that day, thirteen hundred mountaineers overwhelmed a well-armed force of more than ten times their number, and so sent ringing down the centuries a note of triumph that has been an inspiration to the Schweizer ever since. In the following year (1316) the Emperor Lewis formally declared the three cantons free from the over lordship of

the Dukes of Austria. Such are, briefly stated, the facts concerning the first assertion of Swiss independence. The romantic legends which for so many generations passed as history, and in which Tell and Gessler figure so largely, have had—with reluctance, it must be confessed—to be dismissed to the realm of fable, where they rightly belong.

Between the years 1332 and 1353, the three cradle cantons, as we may term them, had their strength augmented by the adhesion to their Confederation of Zug, Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, and Berne. Towards the end of the fifteenth century Freiburg and Soleure likewise became parties to this league of free “Schwyzers,” as they were now generally called. A few years later, after a stiff fight against the Emperor Maximilian, the independence of the Confederation was practically established, and its membership increased by the accession of Basel, Schaffhausen, and Appenzell. The *Bund*, as the Confederation is styled in German, now consisted of thirteen states, all German-speaking and all confined within the basin of the Rhine (including its tributary, the Aar). This was the peculiarity of the original Swiss Confederation, that it was German in birth, in tradition, and in form of thought, and that it did not extend its bounds to take in peoples speaking other tongues, and of habits of life essentially different to theirs, until 1798. It had, however, established an alliance with certain petty

neighbouring states, among them being St. Gall, Valais, Neuchâtel, and the Leagues of Rhætia (that is, of Graubünden), while the Forest Cantons held as a tributary district part of what is now the canton of Tessin.

Surviving the struggles of the Reformation almost, as one may say, by the skin of the teeth, the little republic was destined to go down before the fury of the French Revolution. However, though crushed for the time being, the Swiss were by no means beaten. They only bided their time, and it came when, in 1803, Napoleon, as First Consul, interposed with his "Act of Mediation," whereby the old cantonal arrangement and constitution was to a certain extent restored. At the same time the cantons of St. Gall, Aargau, Thurgau, Vaud, Graubünden, and Tessin were added to the *Bund*, thus increasing the number of confederated states to nineteen. This arrangement lasted only until 1815, when, on the downfall of Napoleon, these liberty-loving children of the Alps, rising to a man, seized the opportunity to resume all their old rights and privileges, and to go back, as far as was then possible, to the condition of things in being anterior to the Revolution. A "Federal Pact" was drawn up and signed at Zurich in that year, one of the most notable things connected with it being the accession of three new cantons—those, namely, of Geneva, Neuchâtel, and Valais—to the *Bund*, thus raising its constituent members to the pre-

sent number of twenty-two. Equally important is the fact that by the Treaty of Vienna the independence and neutrality of Switzerland were guaranteed by Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Portugal. The country was thus started, under the most favourable auspices, on a new era of progress and prosperity.

The onward course, however, was by no means a smooth one. Within the bounds of the Confederation were mixed up, along with a very "live" people, a great many very heterogeneous elements. Hence there arose a movement, a stir of life, a going to and fro, in this little out-of-the-way land, such as had never before been known. This had been rendered the easier by the great roads which Napoleon had caused to be made across the Alps, and which, bringing as they did numberless visitors to the country and a great deal of gold, gave the Swiss the desire, as well as the means, to continue the same work. The activity thus inspired and inaugurated has never since been intermitted. Nor was this rush of travel without its effect in producing a concurrent stir of ideas.

It has frequently been said that Schiller, through his drama of *William Tell*, and Goethe by his *Letters from Switzerland*, did a great deal not only to reveal Switzerland to its people, but to the world at large; and the fact is indisputable, as has been frequently acknowledged by Swiss writers. Yet, great as is the indebtedness of the

people of Switzerland to those two famous Germans, they in some respects owe a still larger debt of gratitude to Byron, not only for what he did to make the Alps, and especially the Lake of Geneva, known to the world, but for doing much besides to stir up and vitalise the dead and arid bones of old custom and wont with the fire of living thought. This has often been acknowledged to me by Swiss men and women of distinction and eminence, more particularly, however, in the French-speaking cantons.

From the signing of the Federal Pact, in 1815, to the year 1848 was a period of great and almost perpetual stress and turmoil, and it looked very much at one time as though the Confederation was going to fall to pieces. The chief trouble, or at least the one which led to the greatest danger, arose in the main from religious differences, with the Jesuit as a potent inciting cause. However, after a state of war, which fortunately lasted but three weeks, the attempted scission was put an end to; and all parties, sobered somewhat by the danger through which they had passed, went to work in a more conciliatory spirit than had hitherto obtained to put the national house in order. The result was the revision of the Federal Pact of 1815, and the placing of the constitution on a more satisfactory basis. By this supreme Act of 1848 the Confederation was converted from a *Staatenbund*—that is, a number of states banded together for the purposes of de-

fence and mutual help—into a *Bundesstaat*, *i. e.*, a single state, from which, though the separate parts retain a certain amount of independence, they cannot recede when and as they like.

The constitution then adopted, with certain important modifications (introduced by the fresh revision of 1874), is the one still in force, and is so remarkable an evidence of conservative yet progressive statesmanship that it is well worth a brief study. The object of the Confederation, according to the revised Constitution of 1874, is declared to be the preservation of the independence of the country, the protection of the rights and liberties of the people, and the increase of their common prosperity. Under this Constitution the cantons remain sovereign so far as their sovereignty is not limited by the powers given to the Federal authorities, and as such they exercise all the rights not thus delegated. The powers which have been handed over to the Federal Government are those which make it supreme in all matters relating to peace, war, and treaties, as well as in such questions as relate to the army, the postal, telegraph, and telephone systems, the coining of money, the issue and repayment of bank-notes, and Swiss weights and measures. All questions of general revenue likewise come within its competence, and it legislates besides in matters touching civil capacity, copyright, bankruptcy, patents, and sanitary police. To it also is entrusted the carrying out of such public works

as concern the well-being of the people or the country as a whole, including (as already stated) the protection of forests, the construction of roads and railways, the conservation of rivers, lakes, etc. On the Federal Government, too, has been conferred the power to establish, when it sees fit, a Federal University, and to control the same, as it now does the Polytechnic School which has for many years been doing such good educational work at Zurich.

By a recent law the Central Government has also obtained exclusive control over the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors. This new power was necessitated by the alarming extent to which drunkenness was increasing throughout the Confederation, and it was freely accorded by a popular vote of the entire country, taken on the 25th of October, 1885.

Previous to that date practically anyone could manufacture alcohol, and the result was demoralising in the extreme. Now, by a recent decision of the Federal Chambers, the production of spirit is limited to thirty thousand hectolitres annually. The Federal regulation of alcohol has been much discussed in late years from the point of view of the results obtained, financial and other. "If it has not completely attained the end aimed at in the outset by its originators," says a recent authority, "we can nevertheless assert that, regarded from the point of view of agriculture, it has had the important result of transforming a

The Sovereignty of the People 37

practice which was demoralising in the highest degree into a wholesome industry, and one remarkably adapted to the conditions of the agriculture which feeds it."

The same writer goes on to say that, in criticising the existing arrangements regulating the traffic in alcohol, people are apt to forget the condition of things which they brought to an end, and the improved outlook for the moral and physical health of the people which has been inaugurated by "the abolition of the uncontrolled manufacture of a detestable beverage, the use of which extended even to the food of children, and whose evil effects, like a veritable leprosy, left their mark on the fairest regions of the land."

The way in which the proceeds of the Federal alcohol monopoly are disposed of is a striking illustration of the divided sovereignty which is the basis of Swiss national and communal life. The net profits thus arising—which in 1898 amounted to 6,453,335 francs (\$1,250,000)—go to the cantons, and are used by them for the purposes of the State ; but each canton is bound to expend one tenth of the amount received in combating alcoholism both as regards its causes and its effects. In some of the German cantons a portion of the fund thus obtained is devoted to the support of asylums for the inebriate.

In all other matters save those above referred to, the cantons have complete liberty of action as regards the management of their own internal

affairs. They not only have complete control of all matters concerning themselves alone, but they can conclude treaties with foreign States in regard to questions of public economy and touching frontier and police regulations, provided there be nothing in such treaties contrary to the Federal Constitution, or to the rights of other cantons. In short, apart from and notwithstanding the specific powers delegated to the Federal Government, each canton jealously safeguards its position as a sovereign State, and, indeed, gives its adhesion and support to the Confederation explicitly on the condition that, within the limits prescribed, it shall guarantee and protect such sovereignty.

Moreover, while the cantons, or the people of the cantons, delegate certain powers to the Federal Government, they are supposed not to part, in any sense, with their sovereign rights. This is the most peculiar, and at the same time the most striking, feature of the Swiss political system ; it is one, also, which needs to be thoroughly grasped before the fundamental principle of their complicated constitution can be properly comprehended. According to the theory of Swiss rights, all sovereign power resides originally in the people. All authority, therefore, is vested in them, and they are so jealous of that authority that they will not surrender it to any man or any body of men. They are, of course, obliged to delegate power to individuals, and to authorise

them to act temporarily, and under certain conditions, in their behalf ; but upon all such delegated authorities they keep a powerful check-rein, which, it is perfectly within bounds to say, they never relinquish out of their hands. This check-rein is dual in character ; in other words, it is composed of two parts, one being called the " Referendum," and the other the popular " Initiative."

Most persons who have taken any interest in politics of late years have heard or read of these two characteristic Swiss institutions ; the Referendum in particular having been advocated by several writers on political subjects as a substitution for the English Upper House, and as a means of obviating or counteracting some of the evils of party and parliamentary government. The Referendum may be described as a reference to the people of a law or political measure, which has already been discussed and put into shape by the legislative body, but which cannot become a legal enactment until it has been approved by a majority of the electors voting for or against.

The Referendum is no new thing in Switzerland, and seems to have had its origin in the *Landsgemeinde*, of which I shall have something to say later. As long ago as the sixteenth century the people of Zurich and Berne were called upon to decide the question of the Reformation, as applied to themselves, by means of the Referendum, although not in the way it is now known.

In its present form the institution is comparatively modern. It existed in the cantons of Valais and the Grisons before 1848, and, strange to say, in the former it was suppressed in that year with the consent of both political parties. Perhaps they found it, as politicians of all shades admit it to be, a two-edged sword which cuts both ways. In 1858, the canton of Neuchâtel adopted the Referendum, reserving it, however, exclusively for financial matters. Three years later Vaud did the same.

At present such reservations no longer exist. All the cantons, with one or two exceptions, now put it in practice and apply it to all legislative Acts. In many of the cantons, indeed, it is not confined to cantonal matters, but is adopted in the communes, or, as we should say, in the parishes. Finally, in accordance with the principle recognised in 1848, that the people have a right to participate in the life of the Confederation, the Referendum was formally made part of the revised Constitution of 1874. Article 89 of that Constitution provides that all laws passed by the Federal Assembly shall be submitted for the approval of the people if a demand be made to that effect by thirty thousand citizens, or by eight cantons, that is, by eight cantonal Governments. The same principle applies to all measures adopted by the Federal executive which have a general bearing, and which are not specially urgent in character. The Referendum is

thus optional, or “ facultative,” as it is usually called, in its application to Federal matters ; but as adopted in the cantons, and as applied to local State matters, it is sometimes optional and sometimes compulsory. In the cantons of St. Gall, Zug, Lucerne, Basel-city, Schaffhausen, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Geneva, and Tessin it is optional ; while in Zurich, Berne, Thurgau, Aargau, Soleure, Schwyz, the Grisons, and Basel-land it is obligatory. Valais adopts the Referendum in relation to financial matters. Freiburg clings to its old representative form of government ; whilst Uri, Glarus, the two Unterwaldens, and Appenzell (Inner and Ausser Rhoden) still find their primitive and picturesque *Landsgemeinden* sufficient for all their needs.

There is, of course, much difference of opinion throughout Switzerland as to the value of the Referendum. One can hardly take a railway journey from one part of the country to another without meeting with almost every shade of view in regard to it. There is, however, among the more intelligent a general consensus of opinion that an institution which places the sovereign will of the people above that of the constituted authorities and legislative bodies, and so puts a check upon them, is a potent instrument for good in the hands of a wise and instructed people. No doubt it may be abused ; no doubt the most carefully considered measures of statesmen may be wrecked by the ignorance and prejudice of

political partisanship, for it has already been proved that the enemies of a proposed enactment are more eager to go to the polls than its friends. But the fact remains that thus far the Referendum has acted well. It has shown that there is no desire among the body of the public for hasty legislation, yet that when a proposed change has been long enough before the people for them to comprehend its bearings, they are generally ready to adopt it. The Swiss, however, are a thrifty people, living and doing well on small means, and they are apt to boggle at large financial outlays. They are wisely suspicious of the augmentation of public burdens and of any change that threatens the simplicity of life and habits which has hitherto characterised them. To my mind this is the most striking lesson of the Referendum. It was thought by many that such an instrument in the hands of the democracy, in conjunction with the Initiative, would lead to hasty and ill-considered legislation, and, in short, would soon bring about a general political deluge. But the very reverse of this has happened. The Referendum has proved the Swiss democracy to be conservative to the very core.

The Initiative is the natural corollary of the Referendum. The latter sets the stamp of popular approval, or the reverse, upon a measure which has been proposed for legal enactment; the Initiative recognises the further right of the people to a first voice in proposing legislation.

In brief, it constitutionally establishes the competence of the private or lay person to set afoot any measure for the reform of the Constitution which he thinks might be useful, provided he can secure the signatures of fifty thousand persons in its favour. Article 120 of the Federal Constitution says, " They can also demand, by the popular Initiative, the abrogation or modification of given articles of the Federal Constitution, as well as the adoption of new formal dispositions." It goes on to say that when fifty thousand Swiss citizens, having the right to vote, present a petition of this kind, the question shall be submitted to the people whether the partial revision asked for shall take place. If a majority of the persons casting their vote pronounce affirmatively, then the Federal Assembly must set about making the revision indicated. This, of course, means nothing more than that the Assembly — composed of the National Council and the Council of States — shall lay the matter formally before the people, who by means of the Referendum will register their final yea or nay.

The popular Initiative is now constitutional in the major part of the cantons ; but here, as in everything else, the peculiar genius of the people strikingly shows itself. In few of these cantons is the Initiative exercised in the same way and to the same extent. In some it can be put in force only at the *Landsgemeinden* ; in others it is applicable only to the revision of the cantonal

constitution ; while in others, again, it may be applied to the whole domain of legislation.

Thus it will be seen how the communes delegate certain powers to the canton, and the canton, for them, certain powers to the Confederation. This delegated power is wielded by the Federal Assembly, which consists of the National Council and the Council of States. The National Council is elected direct, on the basis of one member for every twenty thousand persons of the population, every man who has completed his twentieth year being entitled to a vote. The Council of States consists of forty-four members, each canton sending two members, each half-canton one.

Both the members of the National Council and the members of the Council of States are paid, the first from the Federal treasury, the second by the cantonal authorities. Each chamber is elected triennially, and the two meet together at each renewal of their powers to elect the Federal Council, which corresponds, in a sort, to the British Cabinet, and is composed of seven members. Each member, chosen from the National Council, must belong to a different canton, and on election ceases to be a deputy. This Council chooses every year from its own members a president and a vice-president, who cannot occupy the same post two years in succession. The President of the Federal Council is the President of the Swiss Republic. If his position is one of less brilliance and distinction than that enjoyed by the President

of the French Republic, or than that of the President of the United States, it is also one of less personal responsibility, and likewise one of less danger to the commonwealth itself.

As regards the Federal Council, there is one word of explanation which should be added here. It is that this Council is the very opposite of the English Cabinet in that it is not a party combination. It may be, and as a matter of fact is, composed of men of every shade of political feeling ; but all party bias is sunk or lost sight of in the duty of carrying out the will of the people, who, as we have seen, possess so many means of making that will known and felt. In this respect the Federal Council probably resembles no other responsible executive in a modern state.





CHAPTER IV

THE GEMEINDEN AND THE LANDSGEMEINDEN

SWITZERLAND is at present, as Mr. Leslie Stephen has so well named it, "the Playground of Europe"; but the time is coming when it will be the Mecca of all students and admirers of pure and unadulterated democratic government. The historical student will find it developing through many stages, some extremely curious and surprising, which even to-day show their traces in customs and privileges that are almost mediæval in their unconventional quaintness and oddity. The ancient costumes of the people, save here and there in remote valleys, are dying out, and the omnipresent schoolmaster is effacing many of the more salient differences of character which mark the various districts of the country; but there are certain traits and institutions which seem to give hostages to time and bid defiance to change, like the hills which overshadow them. Some of these I shall have occasion to refer to in subsequent chapters, and I will at present, therefore, confine my attention to the commune and the *Landsgemeinde*.

Gemeinden and Landsgemeinden 47

These are the two most characteristic institutions of the country, and one cannot properly understand its political constitution, either as regards the Confederation or the cantons, without a thorough comprehension of them. All political life, all individual right, centres in the commune, or, as it is called in the German-speaking cantons, the *Gemeinde*. The Swiss citizen is first of all a member of his commune. Without that link there is no citizenship. The commune is therefore the unit of political life, and upon it the Federal Constitution is based. No one can take away a man's right as member of his commune ; only by his own act may a man's right in that respect be impaired or destroyed.

The commune may be said to exist both in the abstract and in the concrete sense. The term carries with it the idea of certain inalienable rights and privileges, a bond whereby certain individuals are held together in mutual duty and obligation, a social possession common to a number of people ; but it also carries with it the further signification of an extent of land to which these people are linked by right of birth, and from which they cannot be divorced. This land is held by them in common. Hence the name commune, or *Gemeinde*, which means the same thing.

There are three thousand of these communes in Switzerland, varying vastly in size, in the nature of their soil, in their products, and in other particulars. Some of them, of course, are purely

agricultural, sparsely populated, and very poor. Others, being the sites of large towns or thriving villages, are in a very different position as regards wealth and the amenities of life from those wherein a niggard soil has to be laboured and belaboured early and late in order to extract from it the barest subsistence. Originally, all the inhabitants of a commune had equal rights in the communal lands. But in course of time, as populations moved about more freely, and strangers began to settle in communes in which they were not born, there gradually arose two classes of burgesses, one known as the *Bürger*, or citizen proper, the other known as an "inhabitant" merely.

The difference is essential. The *Bürger*, or descendant of the original settlers, alone has the right to take part in the management of the communal lands. The assembly in which he and his fellow-citizens discuss questions concerning these lands is called the *Bürgergemeinde*. It is almost identical with the Communal Assembly, which controls the political affairs of the commune; save that when a question touching the communal lands comes up for decision, the later arrivals or "inhabitants" refrain from voting.

This distinction between *Bürger* and "inhabitant" is very sharply drawn in some of the older and more conservative cantons; but it is beginning to give way to larger and more reasonable views.



A WOMAN OF APPENZELL AT HER
EMBROIDERY FRAME



FEMALE COSTUME, THURGAU

Only a few months ago one of these vestiges of rights coming down from the Middle Ages was done away with in the canton of Berne. Near Langenthal there is an extensive pasturage, which at one time belonged to the convent of St. Urbain, but which subsequently became the property of the communes of Langenthal and Schoren. The ancient right of pasturage on this land was maintained, even though some of the burgesses had acquired portions of it by purchase. Thence arose a very strange anomaly : for whilst during several weeks in the autumn the *Bürgers* of Langenthal and Schoren could send their cattle to feed upon these pastures, those who were merely "inhabitants" were prohibited from doing so, even though some of them had become owners of portions of the land in question. It was seen at length that this state of things could not continue, and so for a sum of twenty thousand francs the two communes agreed to allow to all, *Bürgers* and "inhabitants" alike, equal rights of pasturage.

The relations between the two kinds of communal rights existing in the same *Gemeinde*—that is, between the rights of the *Bürger* and the lesser rights of the "inhabitant"—have been the occasion of a great deal of trouble in some of the cantons. There is, perhaps, no single question connected with Swiss politics that has given rise to so much discussion and difference of opinion between opposing parties. The aim of

the Radical party has been for years to abolish the so-called "*Bürger communes*," and to establish in their place what they term "uniform" communes—that is, communes that shall embrace all the inhabitants. The idea is making steady progress, although it must be confessed that it is slow, except in the more progressive French-speaking cantons.

The laws and customs which obtain in the various communes are apt to differ in very material ways. Each commune, however, is in itself free and independent. So long as it does not go beyond its own proper privileges there is no one to interfere with it. Each commune is sufficient for itself, being practically, whether small or large, a state in miniature, with an organised government, consisting of an executive and a deliberative body. In the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, the latter body, known as the *Gemeinderath*, is composed of all the male burgesses—that is, of all the resident males who have attained twenty years of age. They meet together at stated periods and decide questions of public importance. At these assemblies, too, the annual budget is fixed, the communal accounts are passed, new taxes levied, and the executive council and other local officials elected. In some of the cantons attendance at these meetings is compulsory, and there is a fine for non-attendance. The executive, or, as it is sometimes called, Communal Council, consists of

three or four members, and is presided over by a mayor or syndic. In the larger communes there is a more extensive differentiation of function, special committees, for instance, having charge of the schools and matters pertaining to education, or it may be having the supervision of the roads, public buildings, water rights, and so forth.

As already said, the communal system exists throughout the length and breadth of Switzerland, and is the fountain-head of all political life. There is, however, a difference between the communal life of the French-speaking or *Wülsch* cantons and that in which German is the mother tongue. It is in this part of Switzerland that the communal spirit is seen in its sturdiest form. To the French Swiss the feeling of the sovereignty of the commune seems to come less naturally than to the German Swiss, who have been nurtured in this "elementary school of liberty" for ages. M. Dubs, in his work, *Le Droit Public de la Confédération Suisse*, says, "In French Switzerland there is a general idea that communal life emanates from above, and we have no sort of communal assembly. Sometimes the communal electors merely have the right of electing the Communal Council, which is responsible for nominating the Municipal Council, or Executive. This lack of communal life reacts on the political life, and the French-speaking peoples are much too ready to listen to those in power and wait for them to take the initiative." The distinction is summed up

very concisely by Mr. A. L. Lowell.¹ "Among the Germans," he says, "there is more jealousy and distrust of the government, and more confidence in the direct action of the people ; while the French are less democratic in the Swiss sense of the term, and more inclined to follow the lead of the regular authorities."

It need hardly be said that the communes, as the units of political life, present the greatest possible variety in their laws and methods of procedure. In the older and more sparsely populated cantons, like Zug and Uri, we find the simplest forms. In the assemblies for public business all the burgesses vote directly, not by representative. In populous places like Berne and Zurich this is, of course, impossible. In such towns, therefore, it is necessary to have Councils elected by the people. In Berne, since 1887, there has been a *Gemeinderath*, or Communal Council, of nine members, and a Municipal Council, which acts as a check on the Communal Council. These Councils are elected annually by the people of the commune, who, however, in no way give up their powers to them ; hence there must be an annual voting on all questions of importance, and on these occasions the people are very ready to show their independence and their public spirit. Thus in the summer of 1896 the people of Berne were asked to sanction the introduction of proportional representation in the election of the Com-

¹ *The Referendum and the Initiative.*

munal Council, a proposal which was rejected. On the same occasion they adopted a suggestion for reducing the price of gas and a proposition with reference to the maintenance of the cathedral tower. It will be seen from these instances how thoroughly the Swiss people keep their hands on public business. They never, in fact, wholly relinquish the check-rein on their public bodies. Moreover, they not only reserve to themselves the power to reject measures proposed to them, but they jealously guard the right of Initiative. Thus in Berne any five hundred citizens may submit a proposal to the Councils, which they in due course are bound to lay before the people.

Zurich presents a similar state of things. Zurich has been said to be the most democratic and go-ahead community in Switzerland, and it well deserves the reputation. Its people never hesitate to make a change if it seems likely to prove an improvement. In 1891, they made a thorough reorganisation of the commune, forming for deliberative purposes a Grand Municipal Council, and an Executive Council composed of nine members. But here, too, as in the case of Berne, there is no surrender of power. All matters of the first importance must be submitted to the popular vote, as well as all financial proposals over a certain amount. Thus, in 1896, the people, having already acquired existing tramways, accepted a motion to lay down three additional lines. They at the same time voted in favour of

a proposition for buying land whereon to erect workmen's dwellings. As in Berne, any body of citizens in Zurich can initiate legislation, provided they are able to get their proposal backed by eight hundred voters.

In what are known as the *Landsgemeinde* cantons, namely, Uri, Glarus, Obwald, Nidwald, and the two Appenzells, there is usually but one council, which is the executive, everything of a legislative nature being transacted at the communal meetings. There once a year, generally on the last Sunday in April or the first Sunday in May, the whole body of burghers assemble in their capacity of legislators. This is the *Landsgemeinde*. Here the democratic principle in its purest form is seen at work, the right of Initiative as well as that of the Referendum finding in it at one and the same time their natural expression. In the canton of Glarus the burghers are invited once a year, in the month of January, to present to the *Landrath* any propositions with reference to legislation they desire to bring forward, and it is rare that a number are not sent in. The *Landrath* decides as to their importance, and as to whether they are or are not worthy of being submitted for discussion to the *Landsgemeinde*. But even those propositions not considered of sufficient importance to be discussed cannot be withheld altogether from the people, but must be submitted and either rejected *en bloc* or referred for discussion at the next annual meeting. The *Landsge-*

meinde of Glarus is one of the most striking of all as regards some of its features. As at other *Landsgemeinden*, the women and children are privileged to attend ; but in this case they are given the place of honour, being seated in the very front of the assembly. Here they listen to the discussion of the affairs of the canton, in which, perhaps, their fathers or brothers take an active part, and cannot, of course, help being impressed—the children especially—by the simple and yet dignified ceremony, transacted, as it is, under the eye of heaven and in view of the snow-clad mountains.

I have had the privilege and pleasure of attending two *Landsgemeinde* gatherings, and I know of nothing in the way of public electoral functions more strikingly interesting, and at the same time more wonderfully picturesque. The *Landsgemeinde* of Uri takes place in a meadow at Schaddorf, on the opposite side of the river from Altdorf. The cantonal authorities, mounted, and with the *Landamman* (or president) at their head, march from Altdorf to the place of meeting, preceded by a detachment of soldiers and a band of music. The standard of the canton is conspicuous in the forefront of the procession, and along with it go two men in old-time costume, bearing aloft the two bull's horns, which are at once the insignia and symbol of Uri sovereignty.

The business before the assembly on the occasion referred to was very brief. From the hustings erected for the occasion the different matters

to be settled — and they were very few — were explained to the people present, the arguments for and against were stated by the various speakers, and then the questions were put to the vote, and decided by show of hands. When the agenda had been despatched, the *Landammann* and the other public officials resigned their positions, and were either re-elected or others were chosen in their place. The whole function occupied little more than an hour, and, it need hardly be said, was extremely quaint. It reminded one, in its general features, of nothing so much as an old-time Yorkshire camp-meeting, when teetotallers used to march, with banners flying and band playing, to a suitable field near the village, and there hold forth in the pleasant sunshine on their beloved topic ; only, as regards costume, the Swiss, of course, presented a much more picturesque appearance than the English. In the one case, as in the other, prayer brought the proceedings to a close.

Equally picturesque, and even more mediæval, is the *Landsgemeinde* of Appenzell-inner-Rhoden. Next to Basel-Stadt (which comprises this city only), this half-canton is the smallest of the States composing the Confederation, and numbers but from twelve to thirteen thousand inhabitants, all except some six or seven hundred of them being Catholics. The *Landsgemeinde* is held in the public square of Appenzell, which puts on quite a festive appearance for the occasion. The windows of the houses are thronged

with the women-folk dressed in their old-time costume, and with children to whom it is the gala of the year. The town is almost entirely ringed in with high hills and towering peaks, Hoher Kasten and Kamôr being among the highest ; and they, together with the green height carrying at its top the ruins of Castle Clanx, can be seen from the spot where is celebrated the great yearly function of the little State.

As in the case of Uri, there is a procession of the cantonal officials. It starts from the buildings devoted to public business, and is headed by the *Landamman*, who is, however, preceded by a couple of State functionaries carrying halberds. All except the *Landweibel*, or bailiff, are clothed in black gowns which descend to the feet ; the latter being robed half in white and half in black, those being the colours of the little commonwealth. On one side of the square are two platforms, much like the old election hustings in England. Upon the higher one, the ends whereof are adorned with a sword of Justice, the State officials take their places, while upon the lower one the judges of the Cantonal Court appear in their robes. The space in front of the hustings soon fills with the members of the *Landsgemeinde*—the *ehr-und-wehrfest* (true and steadfast) men of the community—all clad in their decent church-going clothes, chiefly black, and all wearing by their side an old sword or sabre, as sign and symbol of their freedom. Some of the younger men,

however, appear in costume, and thus give a touch of colour to the scene. If the attendance be very good there may be from two thousand to twenty-four hundred "good men and true" present. Reverently, with heads uncovered, they stand while the *Landamman* opens the day's proceedings with a speech, dealing with such matters as are uppermost for the time being in the public mind. It is a sight to remember, this simple and stalwart crowd, which presents here and there figures of the rarest type—Capuchin monks, peasants, herdsmen—that might have stepped, so odd and strange are they, clean out of the Middle Ages. Having concluded his discourse, the *Landamman* lays down the seal of State, and descends from the platform, whereupon the *Landschreiber* (*i. e.* the cantonal secretary) invites the *Landsgemeinde* to choose a successor, his election or re-election being followed by that of the other officers of State, and the assembly is brought to a close by the new *Landamman* and then the people taking the oath of fidelity to the State.

This administering of the oath is a very striking ceremony. The *Landschreiber* reads the oath from the *Landbuch*, a portly volume with heavy silver clasps, dating from about the time when the English were whetting their swords to deal with Philip of Spain's Armada. While the oath is being recited, the new *Landamman* stands with head bent low and raised right hand, the fingers of which are held as the priest holds his in bless-



HERDSMAN OF APPENZELL-INNER-RHODEN

ing, and the ancient Æsculapian in mesmerising. After the *Landamman* has taken the oath, the whole *Landsgemeinde* repeat it after him, with the right hand raised in the same way, and so the function comes to a close.

Whilst Inner-Rhoden is holding its *Landsgemeinde* at Appenzell, the neighbouring half-canton of Ausser-Rhoden gathers its people at Hundwil. They come in greater numbers to Hundwil than to Appenzell, Ausser-Rhoden being able to muster its ten thousand *ehr-und-wehrfest* men ; and a moving scene it is to hear and see the great assembly as it opens the day's proceedings with the hymn *Alles Leben strömt aus Dir* ("From Thee all Life doth Stream"). As showing the nature of the business that comes before the *Landsgemeinde*, let me say briefly that, at the assembly held on the last Sunday in April of this year, the people in their sovereign capacity rejected a proposal for the total revision of the cantonal constitution, a law relating to the assurance of cattle, as well as another having to do with the rights of pasturage on the Alpine meadows. The *Landsgemeinde*, however, at the same time gave its sanction to a law relating to colportage and the public markets, as well as to a project for the revision of the law concerning the cantonal bank, and another relating to the execution of the Federal law in relation to actions at law and bankruptcy. A well-known State Councillor was appointed *Landamman*, and

two new members of the *Landrath* were likewise elected ; then, with mutual oaths of fidelity to each other and the State, the proceedings were brought to a close.

On the same day as the above, the *Landsgemeinden* of the two Unterwaldens took place. That of Obwald was held at Sarnen, on the classic Landenberg, and in spite of very bad weather, called together between twelve and fifteen hundred burghers. Three measures of importance were submitted to the assembly, two of which, one proposing the revision of the constitution, and another relating to the protection of artisans, were adopted, while a third, which concerned a proposition for the employment of water-power for the driving of electrical machinery, was rejected.

The *Landsgemeinde* of Nidwald, held at Stans, had three or four matters of some importance before it, but all were rejected. One had relation to a total revision of the constitution. These suggestions are periodically cropping up all over the country, and are generally incontinently knocked on the head. Then there were two tariff proposals, which met with no better luck ; finally, there was an " Initiative " proposal for the reintroduction of public dancing on the occasion of fairs, etc. This suggestion, we are told, was rejected by a large majority, which was to be expected, the Nidwaldners being, as a rule, sturdy Protestants.



CHAPTER V

PUBLIC EDUCATION

THE Swiss boy and girl are educated with a distinct regard to the respective positions they will have to fill as citizens. They are educated, too, as far as possible—due regard being had, of course, to their respective future duties—with equal breadth and thoroughness in all departments of learning. In short, the girl is given the same chances as the boy for mental and physical development in the way of preparation for professional or other life ; while, as regards both, there is as fair an equality of opportunity provided by the State as is to be found in any country in the world, and a fairer equality than in most.

It is in no sense an exaggeration to say that the Swiss are of all peoples the most thoroughly imbued with the need of education, and at the same time the most conscientious in seeing that its blessings shall be brought to every man's door, or as near thereto as is physically possible. A noted Englishman whom I once met in Switzerland characterised them as " educational cranks."

But then he was typical of those of his countrymen who sum up their views in regard to education in the phrase, "Why teach anything?" There was truer insight in the Frenchman who said, "The Swiss, almost alone amongst nations, have the pedagogic instinct." The peculiarity may arise in part from the fact that so many of its sons—Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Father Girard, Fellenberg, and their disciples—have devoted their attention to the subject of education, and, indeed, may be said to have established the principles of modern education. The good work they began, their fellow-countrymen continue with unabated perseverance, and with a fine insight and method which are eminently worthy of study and emulation.

"In the matter of education," wrote Sir Horace Rumbold, when Secretary of Legation at Berne, "the Swiss people manifest a veritable passion, and it is a thing worthy of sincere admiration . . . to note what heavy self-imposed pecuniary sacrifices they cheerfully make to the cause. The public foundations, the private gifts, the State contributions devoted to education by this otherwise thrifty, close-fisted race, may be truly said to be noble in the extreme." "Our people," says M. Seippel, "have never found too heavy the sacrifices that were demanded of them on behalf of public instruction. They have always understood that in elevating their children they were elevating themselves." Taking the country



SWISS SCHOOL-CHILDREN

as a whole, the average of education is very high, and not the least remarkable feature about the system of public instruction is that it aims at producing practical men—a respect in which, it must be said, it is singularly successful. There are few countries in which can be found so many men who are able to turn their hands—and with success—to different things. The same may be said of the women. All appear to have some gift or handicraft at their fingers' ends, whereby they can, in case of need, earn their bread.

The present system of education dates from 1874, when Switzerland may be said to have taken a fresh start in the world. Previous to 1848, most of the cantons had organized a system of primary schools ; in that year, like most other things, they received a renewed impulse and impetus, which has continued growing and developing ever since. In 1874, education was made compulsory, and placed under the civil authority. According to Article 27 of the Federal Constitution adopted in that year, primary instruction is required to be “sufficient, obligatory, gratuitous, and unsectarian.” But while the Constitution says so much, ordaining also that every child shall enjoy the privileges of instruction until twelve years of age, it leaves the carrying out of the law as regards education to the several cantons. Each canton, in consequence, has its own methods of public instruction. This is quite in accordance with the spirit which

everywhere prevails of allowing to the cantons the regulation and development of their own affairs. Thus, along with general unity, room is given for much diversity, and it is probable that the diversity favours strength rather than weakness.

For instance, though, so far as the Federal law is concerned, twelve is fixed as the limit of primary school age, yet in some cantons this is raised to fourteen, fifteen, and even sixteen years of age. In like manner the first school-year varies from five to seven in different cantons. The subjects taught also vary greatly. Schwyz and Geneva, for instance, combine the teaching of the natural sciences with that of the maternal language. While, however, in Schwyz the teaching of the catechism is obligatory for all Catholic children, in Geneva what religious instruction is given is couched in the broadest spirit. Geneva has introduced the tuition of German, for three hours a week, from the age of eleven. In Schwyz there is no instruction in geometry ; while in Basel-Campagne, as regards drawing, instruction is limited to geometrical outlines. In Geneva the school course requires three hours per week to be devoted to manual work.

It is worthy of note in this connection that, of the 5232 schools possessed by Switzerland, 1060 give lessons in gymnastics all the year round, while 3412 give them during a part of the year. Only a sixteenth of the whole exclude gymnastics from their curriculum.

The maximum number of scholars confided to one master varies from fifty to one hundred and twenty. In Geneva and Neuchâtel the number has been fixed at fifty, while in Zurich the limit is put at one hundred, and in Basel-land at one hundred and twenty. Manual work in the form of cutting out is compulsory for girls in most of the cantons ; in others it is optional. The time devoted to these matters varies from two to eight hours a week.

In French Switzerland, or, as the people themselves prefer to say, in *la Suisse romande*, infant schools form the basis or the lower branch of the elementary schools, and are under public control. In other parts of the country they are more a matter of private enterprise. In north and east Switzerland they are rather caretaking schools, in which little or no instruction is given, except in the shape of exercises and plays designed to call out and direct the various activities of the little ones. It should be said that for school-children who are too poor to obtain proper food and clothing both public and private assistance is freely rendered.

As in other matters connected with primary instruction, great variety also exists in the different cantons in regard to the authority which has control of the schools. While the chief authority is in some cases vested in an educational department or educational council, or both, in others it is entrusted to a director of education, with or without

council. As regards the cost, in some cantons the charge falls almost entirely upon the communes; in others it is divided between the canton and the communes.

In the year 1897, the amount contributed by the cantons to public education was 20,064,983 francs; while the amount contributed by the communes was 21,736,696 francs, making a total of 41,801,679 francs (or \$8,360,335), that is, over 15 francs (or \$3) per head of the population. When it is said that the military expenditure for the same year amounted to 28,408,879 francs, it will be seen how great is the store the Swiss place upon education.

In almost every village throughout the land the primary schools are attended by the children of the rich and poor alike. In this respect there is an utter absence of that snobbishness, so prevalent elsewhere, which leads parents to say that they cannot send their children to the common schools because of the bad habits they would be likely to contract. I once asked a native of Zurich, a man extremely well-to-do, if he did not fear such contamination by sending his children to the primary schools. He smiled. "No," said he, "I have no fear of the kind. Nor has my wife. She even thinks"—here his smile broadened—"she even thinks that the presence of the children of the rich in the schools tends to improve the manners of those who are of poorer parentage. So, you see," he added with a laugh, "even children may

be missionaries in a sense." In Switzerland there is no class of vagrant or destitute children which the educational system fails to reach, "and the visitor," says one authority, "may see side by side the orphan who is fed and clothed by the commune and the son of a well-to-do tradesman or professional man, receiving the same instruction, each being under precisely the same discipline."

In one respect only does there appear to be some slight friction in regard to education, and that is reduced almost to a minimum. Article 27 provides that public schools shall be "so organised that they may be frequented by those belonging to all denominations without prejudice to their freedom of belief or of conscience"; and the Confederation is legally bound to "take such measures as may seem necessary against cantons which do not fulfil their obligations in this respect." During the years immediately following the adoption of the revised Constitution it was perceived by those who were not friendly to any form of denominational instruction that the law touching public elementary education was not being strictly adhered to. Religious teaching was continued within the schools, and in very many communes in the Catholic cantons the teachers were members of religious associations. A determined effort was therefore made to put an end to this state of things. The Radical majority in the Federal Assembly passed a resolution, by

the terms of which an inquiry was to be made into the condition of the schools in the various cantons and evidence collected with a view to future legislation on the subject. The publication of this resolution was the signal for an outcry of "Religion in danger!" throughout the length and breadth of the land, and a Referendum on the question was demanded, the result being that the Federal resolution was rejected by an immense majority. Nothing shows better than this the spirit of the country.

With the freeing of primary instruction two other movements soon began to make themselves felt throughout Switzerland. One of them was for the equalising of education. Already in many parts of the country the gratuitousness of elementary instruction was followed by a diminution of the charges imposed for the acquisition of school material. In one canton the State, acting as publisher, could give books at the lowest possible price; in another it helped the communes to provide such material gratis by giving subsidies. Elsewhere the gratuitous provision of books was made general. Meanwhile, a similar movement was set afoot to extend the system of gratuitous instruction to the secondary schools, as in Basel-Stadt, by augmenting the number of bursaries. This was the means of greatly increasing the number of those who could proceed, without let or hindrance, to the higher branches of education—a number relatively high in certain cantons.

The number of secondary schools to meet the demands for a higher education is very large. They include preparatory schools of all kinds, for girls as well as for boys, private schools, trade schools, agricultural and technical schools, schools of art, and so forth. Among them may also be included the various colleges or *gymnasias* and the industrial schools, one whereof exists in almost all the cantonal capitals, as well as at Winterthur, Burgdorf, Porrentruy, Einsiedeln, Murten, and Brieg. In the Grisons, in Neuchâtel, Geneva, and Soleure, normal schools for the training of teachers are attached either to the cantonal schools or are connected with the local academy or University. But separate establishments for this purpose exist in the cantons of Zurich, Berne, Lucerne, Schwyz, Freiburg, St. Gall, Aargau, Thurgau, Tessin, Vaud, and Valais. The smaller cantons, by virtue of special arrangements, send their future teachers to the seminaries of other cantons. Seven cantons have special normal schools for girls, namely, Zurich, Berne, Aargau, Tessin, Vaud, Valais, and Neuchâtel (in which there is also a Froebel school for female teachers).

The age of entry into the normal schools is fixed at fourteen in the Grisons, at sixteen in Schwyz and at Lausanne, at fifteen in other cantons. The course of instruction lasts two years in Valais, and in the canton of Vaud for young women, but in most of the other cantons it extends to three and four years—in this respect

setting a worthy example to English colleges for the preparation of teachers, where two years is the rule, the result being in too many instances a vast amount of over-pressure, particularly in the colleges for girls. These normal schools are gradually changing their character as special centres for the creation of teachers. They are being brought more in touch with public life, as well as more directly in relation with the public schools, so that a boy or girl can move up steadily step by step from the primary schools, through the secondary, to the seminary, college, or University, where he or she may complete their education for the teaching profession. For in several of the cantons the students destined for teachers in the superior primary schools finish their course at the University, and there is a strong movement abroad to give all primary school teachers the same advantage.

Let me note here, too, a marked tendency, especially in *la Suisse romande*, to put girls on an absolute equality with boys from the point of view of education. We see the evidences of it in the many high schools, even in the smaller towns, where a girl's education may be continued to a fairly high level, while at the high school of Lausanne a girl leaving with a diploma is entitled to continue her studies at the University.

The stipends enjoyed by teachers vary very considerably. In some of the cantons they are as high as from 2640 to 4000 francs (*i. e.*, \$528 to

\$800) a year, with a retiring allowance of six tenths of the salary. This rate of pay, however, is exceptional, the descending scale of payment going in some cases—notably in Graubünden and Valais—as low as 340 and 300 francs per annum.¹ It must be borne in mind, however, that in these cantons the cost of living is not only much lower than in other parts of Switzerland, and in the towns, but the teachers are in many cases provided with house and garden, which means a great deal.

Zurich is generally considered to be ahead of all the other cantons in respect to the thoroughness and efficiency of its educational system. It certainly devotes itself with a whole heart to the education of its future citizens, and to that end spares neither trouble nor expense. Yet \$11 per head cannot be said to be an excessive price to pay annually on this account. How thorough is its system may be judged from the fact that 97.5 per cent. of the children of all classes attend the public elementary schools, although, be it said, primary instruction in private schools is not interdicted. In one canton, at least, that of Soleure, all children are compelled to attend the public schools.

Statistics give the following particulars in regard to school attendance: In the Protestant

¹ For much of the information contained in this chapter I am indebted to a report issued by Herr Grob, Director of Education in the canton of Zurich.

cantons the proportion of school-attending children is as 1 to 5 of the population; in the half-Protestant, half-Catholic cantons, the proportion is as 1 to 7; while in the cantons which are wholly Catholic the proportion is as 1 to 9. This fact is also worthy of note: that of the military contingent of 1898 only 0.24 per cent. could not read, and only 0.82 could not write.

As regards religious education, the greatest diversity of practice obtains in the different cantons. In general in the Protestant cantons religious instruction is given by the ministers of the different sects apart from the secular curriculum of the schools; whilst in the Catholic cantons the opposite rule is observed, religion taking its place along with the other subjects of study. In some districts this instruction is imparted by the regular teachers; but in Lucerne, which may be called the capital of Catholic Switzerland, the religious instruction of the young is left entirely to the Roman Catholic clergy. In Geneva such instruction, which is official, but optional (parents being allowed full liberty in letting their children attend the course or not), is given in all the primary and secondary schools. Since 1888, too, a higher course of instruction, devoted to the study of the origin of Christianity, and likewise of the great non-Christian religions, has been introduced by the Consistory into the upper classes of the high schools for boys and girls. In Vaud, religion is taught in the public elementary schools "from

the historical point of view." In Neuchâtel there is no system of religious instruction, but the schoolhouses may be used by approved persons, and at fitting times, for imparting such instruction. In Appenzell-inner-Rhoden religious instruction is not only given in the primary and repetition schools, but it is the subject chiefly emphasised. The law requires that one member of the central educational committee shall be a clergyman (chosen by the Grand Council), and that on each local board also a cleric shall sit. Appenzell-inner-Rhoden is said to be more under the domination of ecclesiastics than any other canton, and, as in other districts where the same domination prevails, the condition of education is not as satisfactory as it should be. According to the army examination records of the three cantons which show the highest percentage of illiteracy, Inner-Rhoden bears the palm. Uri and Valais complete the trio.

It is to the honour of the Swiss that they have not only made ample provision for the instruction of the young, but they were among the first to complete the Magna Charta of childhood by putting a stop to the employment of children in factories. In 1877 they followed up their legislative Act of 1874, making primary education free and compulsory, by rendering it illegal to put girls or boys to work in factories under fifteen years of age.

This brief account of what is being done for

education in Switzerland would be incomplete without a few words about the universities, of which the little Republic, with its three millions of population, possesses six, besides the magnificent Federal Polytechnic at Zurich. Basel is the only one of any antiquity, having been founded in 1460. It enjoyed a high reputation under Erasmus, and it has since numbered among its professors many celebrated men. The other five universities are all of modern erection, Berne and Zurich dating from the third decade of the nineteenth century, while the oldest of those belonging to *la Suisse romande*, Geneva, does not yet reckon thirty years of existence, although, as an academy, it was founded by Calvin. It, too, has had some notable men in its professorial chairs, not the least remarkable of them being the late Carl Vogt, who did so much for the dissemination of Darwinian thought on the Continent.

The University of Freiburg hardly ranks with the others, being under the patronage of the Pope rather than under that of the Federal Government. It is strongly ultramontane in tendency, and has faculties for theology, law, and philosophy only. All these institutions are carried on at the charge of their respective cantonal governments; save the Polytechnic at Zurich, which is under the direction of the Central Government. No institution for the higher education of the people is doing a more useful work than the Polytechnic. It is divided into seven sections, and

includes courses of instruction in architecture, civil engineering, mechanism as applied to industry, practical chemistry, sylviculture (*i. e.*, forestry), and agriculture, and there is a department, also, for the training of teachers. The Polytechnic is frequented by a considerable number of students (in 1897 it was 871), a large proportion of whom are strangers. The same may be said of the universities, a good half of those who throng their classes being non-Swiss. Among the foreign students may be counted men and women from almost every country in Europe; but—in the eastern universities especially—Russians, perhaps, bulk most numerous. It is, again, to the credit of the Swiss that they were the first to open the doors of their universities to women.

As links between the primary schools and the universities there is throughout Switzerland a rich efflorescence of higher educational establishments, chiefly secondary or district schools, styled in French Switzerland, *écoles moyennes* or *secondaires*, and in Tessin, *scuole elementari maggiori*. The middle schools of a preparatory character—*gymnasia*, as they are sometimes called—are of two classes: (1) Latin schools that serve as stepping-stones to the universities; and (2) Real schools, which prepare students for the Polytechnic. Some of the cantons unite the two kinds of *gymnasia* (Latin, or Humanisti, and Real) in a cantonal school.

There are many other schools and colleges,

public or proprietary, designed to give such special instruction and training to boys and girls as will fit them for particular vocations; and there is, in truth, hardly a department of life or activity the preparation for which is not covered by a seminary or school of some kind. It is acknowledged by the Swiss that their secondary education is not organised as completely as it might be. The material is there, but the method is too often defective. In Geneva, perhaps, the most perfect system prevails, and it is the boast of the canton that, since 1886, when a new law in regard to public instruction was passed, the institutions for public instruction have been knit together in one solid organism, every part of which works harmoniously with the other parts. Thanks to that system, says a recent writer,¹ the student, whatever may be the direction of his studies or the profession to which he aspires, now finds before him a sure and direct way, along which he may progress without delay and without interruption.

In this respect Geneva is ahead of the other cantons; but its neighbour Vaud is not far behind and the more advanced German cantons are feeling their way steadily to the perfection of their educational system. In any case there is no lack of machinery. One can name scarcely an art or trade of any description that has not its school or *atelier d'apprentissage* ('prentice workshop). Among the number may be mentioned schools

¹ M. François Gueux, *La Suisse au XIX^{me}. Siècle.*

for instruction in silk-weaving, in wood and iron work, in mechanism (as applied to watch and clock making), in art (as applied to embroidery among other things), in household management, and so forth.

Reference must, lastly, be made to the careful attention which is given to school hygiene. It is generally recognised that, by compelling the attendance of children at school, the law places upon itself the obligation of seeing that the young do not suffer in physique from such attendance. Hence have arisen the periodical medical inspection of schools, the provision of baths for the scholars, and other agencies of a preventive character by which it is hoped not only to act beneficially on the school-children themselves, but in the long run upon the health of the whole people. Nor do these measures exhaust the activities at work in favour of a healthy and happy childhood. The public conscience has taken these things so much to heart that it compels the schools to see that children do not go with insufficient food or clothing, and that when their homes are distant they may be able to dine near the school. The vacation colonies (referred to in another place), milk cures for weakly children, and other similar agencies are outgrowths of the same spirit, so deeply rooted in the Swiss that the generation of to-morrow is largely plastic in the hands of the generation of to-day.



CHAPTER VI

PHILANTHROPIC WORK

THE Swiss have long had for their motto the words, "All for one, and one for all," and the sentiment therein enshrined has certainly been their constant inspiration in the domain of public and private beneficence. It has been remarked by a recent writer, M. Th. Secretan, that "Switzerland has not remained in the rear-guard of the army of conquerors in the realm of peace, who have assumed as their task the work of breaking down the fortresses of ignorance, depravity, and vice, and who have generously spent both themselves and their money in combating the innumerable miseries, both physical and moral, from which society suffers." The word is a true one. There is, perhaps, something invidious in saying that this or the other country is the most beneficent or the most philanthropic; but while carefully avoiding such comparisons, it may truly be said that, according to its wealth and population, Switzerland certainly stands in the front rank of nations noted for their well-doing in this respect.

There is hardly any section of society or any department of life that the Swiss have not ramified with organisations of one kind or another whose aim is the amelioration of the conditions of existence. Some of these organisations, like that of the *Société suisse d'utilité publique*, are of ancient date; although by far the greater number owe their origin to the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is explicable on the ground that Switzerland passed through so many trials, political and other, during the earlier part of the century, and was so roused by the effort which was necessary to meet and overcome them, that the result was a complete resurgence of public spirit and religious thought.

Nothing could give a better idea of the practical philanthropy everywhere at work in Switzerland than a brief survey of some of the ways in which this Society of Public Utility expends its efforts. Every canton has its branch of the society except Schwyz and Valais. But besides the cantonal sections, there are thirty-one district sub-sections, of which ten are in Aargau, eleven in Zurich, five in Soleure, four in Berne, and one in St. Gall. It may with truth be said that hardly any movement has taken place in Switzerland, whose object was the public good in whatever form, in which this society has not had its share, either in helping to form opinion, or in stretching forth its powerful helping hand.

At one time I knew a poor little printer who,

by the aid of his clever and well-educated wife, managed to keep himself and his small family handsomely on something under forty francs (\$8.) a week, and to devote his mite in addition to the funds of the Society of Public Utility, of which he was a member. Much of the small leisure that fell to his lot was devoted to the work of this organisation, and greatly was I surprised from time to time at the multifarious matters with which it occupied itself, and that in no mere *dilettante* spirit, and the manifold ways in which it reached forth its beneficent hand. The world over, there are never wanting objects for commiseration and timely succour; but such cases appear to be more than usually common in Switzerland, where, what with flood, avalanches, fires (often caused by lightning), to say nothing of the common accidents of everyday life, there is an ever-active call upon the good-will of the willing.

Fortunately such calls are not often on the scale of that which resulted from the fire that on September 17, 1877, reduced a large part of Airolo to ashes. The damage done, over and above what was covered by insurance, amounted to something like 1,430,000 francs. In order to meet this need the Society of Public Utility made an appeal to the public, and collected four hundred thousand francs. Still more recently (1887) the same society raised a sum of over seven hundred thousand francs in aid of the victims of a sinking of the ground in the canton of Zug, and, in 1891, on the

occasion of destructive fires at Meiringen, Rebesten, Ladir, and Slamischot, the sum of one hundred and eighty-five thousand francs was collected. And here it may be noted that, in view of the frequency of such catastrophes, arising from the untamable forces of nature, several cantons, among them being Berne, St. Gall, Thurgau, and the Grisons, have established special funds for the benefit of those who suffer from disasters of the kind, and every year a special collection is made for the replenishment of the treasury. In the Grisons this collection takes place on the national fast day. In St. Gall, where in 1897 the fund for the purpose indicated amounted to three hundred and ninety-five thousand francs, the annual collection averages fifteen thousand francs.

It will give a better idea of the philanthropic activity displayed by the Society of Public Utility, as well as by the Swiss in general, if I summarise the work done by one branch of the society, that of Basel, in 1898. Among other things, it conducted the "foundation Riggensbach," on behalf of the families of persons suffering imprisonment; extended a helping hand to four hundred and eighteen persons just liberated from prison; carried on eleven district libraries with fifteen hundred annual readers; an address-office for out-of-work clerks, thus furnishing employment to two hundred and twenty-one persons; a guardian school for boys, the aim of which is to take boys from the streets in bad weather; a bureau for the

loan of sewing and knitting machines to women who work at home; an orphanage containing one hundred and thirty-one children; and an asylum for homeless young girls with ten inmates. In addition to these various agencies, the same organisation directed popular restaurants in six quarters of the city; worked a *caisse d'assurance* against death or old age, and a *dépôt* for the loan of special furniture and utensils for the sick and decrepid, fifteen hundred articles being lent in the course of the year; and conducted a course of gratuitous lessons in cookery for young women, of which one hundred and fourteen persons took advantage. Nor does this list of good works exhaust the activity of this merely cantonal section of a widely ramified society; for, not to speak of other agencies, it aided in apprenticing twenty-three boys, by finding a premium when that was required, and by otherwise providing the money to give the lads a start; and, lastly, distributed eleven thousand, two hundred and thirteen metres of material amongst three thousand and twenty-four girls for school-work. And yet, remarkable as this catalogue of work is, it cannot be called exceptional; other cantonal branches of the same society could show an activity as great and varied. So strong, indeed, is the faith of the Swiss in the "gospel of work," and so many are the agencies to fit persons for it, and even to find it for them, that no one need go idle a single day.

Quite as important, if not altogether so hopeful,



A BASEL WOMAN AT WORK

are the almost numberless organisations spread throughout the cantons for the lifting-up of those who have fallen, and for the helping of those who, having perhaps lapsed into wrong-doing through thoughtlessness, would fain get into the right path again. Many of these agencies take the shape of societies for the assistance of released prisoners, and the fact that such organisations multiply rather than decrease in number shows that they are not without encouraging results. Useful auxiliaries to these institutions are the "Labour Colonies" established in different parts of the country. These are of more recent date, one of the first, I believe, that of the Tannenhof, near Gampelen, in the Bernese Seeland, having been founded in 1889.

One of the most striking features of Swiss beneficence is the thought and care which it has always devoted to the young. Its principle of action seems to be, "Start the plant right, and it will grow strong." Cantonal governments vie with private charity in their generous efforts on behalf of the young. Rural asylums and country colonies, together with societies of every description for the protection of children, multiply themselves on every hand, and have already—it is no exaggeration to say—saved hundreds and thousands of children from moral and physical ruin. It would be impossible to refer to a tithe of these various agencies; but I may mention, among others, the agricultural and industrial colony of

Serix in the canton of Vaud, founded in 1863; the colony of Sonnenberg, near Lucerne, established in 1859 by the Society of Public Utility, above referred to; the *Solidarité*, a Vaudois society for the protection of unfortunate children; and the Geneva committee for the care of abandoned children, dating from 1892, of which the leading spirit, until his death a year or two ago, was Alexandre Gavard. Another agency with the same end in view, though exceptional in its method, was that carried on by Mlle. de Lerber, who, convinced that a complete change of scene and of habits is one of the most efficacious means of exercising a beneficent influence over children who have fallen into vicious habits through the neglect of their education, sent every year a certain number of young girls for a shorter or longer stay in Canada, whither she, on two occasions, made a journey to see how her young *protégées* were getting on. So I might mention the Bernese establishments of the Gotthelf society, the first of which was opened twenty years ago; the Zurich society for the succour of abandoned children, dating from 1865; and the asylum for children at Mendrisio, in the canton of Tessin, to which a noble Tessinese, Giovanni Bernasconi, recently left a large part of his fortune.

Besides *crèches* innumerable in the larger towns, and *Cuisines scolaires*, founded so that school children who have to go long distances from home may have good warm dinners in the cold and wet

season, the philanthropy which focusses itself chiefly upon the young has also thought of the children who, cooped up in the narrow streets of towns and cities, would seldom get a breath of the pure air of the country or of the mountains were it not for the "vacation colonies" which have been provided for that purpose. Pastor Bion, of Zurich, was the original promoter of these holiday colonies, which are now to be found in most parts of Switzerland.

The Genevese, always a little in advance, have pushed their solicitude for the welfare of the young even beyond the vacation colonies amid the hills and among the lakes of the home land, and have a committee at work which every year sends a number of children and young people suffering from scrofula and other similar complaints to Cettes, Cannes, and Sestri-Levante (Liguria) for the benefit of the sea-air and the bathing. A journey from Switzerland to the seaside is no light matter, nor an inexpensive one ; but these fellow-citizens of Calvin, Rousseau, and others like them do not stop at trifles when it is a question of helping the young and the poor, especially if they be in any way ailing.

I do not know whether Switzerland produces, in proportion to its population, a larger number of deaf-mutes, blind, idiots, or children suffering from epilepsy, than other countries. It certainly has its share, and they constitute a by no means light burden for those who are blessed with the

altruistic spirit. Fortunately there is no lack of that spirit in this land of democracy, and so for the care of those who come into the world deficient in respect to sight, hearing, or intelligence, there are throughout the Confederation no fewer than thirty-one institutions, most of them supported by public or private beneficence. One of these establishments, that of Zurich, is for the blind as well as for the deaf and dumb. Two others, one at Könitz, near Berne, and the other at Lausanne, receive only the blind. The latter, among other things, makes a feature of teaching its inmates basket and wicker-chair making, etc. It was founded by the philanthropist Haldimand, and dates from 1844.

Fifteen of these institutions are for deaf-mutes, and are distributed through the cantons of Aargau, Basel, Berne, Freiburg, Geneva, the Grisons, Lucerne, St. Gall, Tessin, Vaud, Valais, and Zurich. Thirteen establishments are devoted to the care and education of children intellectually deficient. Two of these—one at Ragensberg, Zurich (founded in 1863), and the other at Weinfelden, in Thurgau (dating from 1895)—were established by that Society of Public Utility which puts its hand to so many good works. The same society is about to found an asylum for idiot children at Kienberg, in Basel-land, to which the State has promised an annual subsidy of four thousand francs, and a committee has been formed in the Grisons with a view to establishing a can-

tonal institution for children of weak intellect. As regards the epileptic, Switzerland already possesses a model establishment at Zurich, which was opened in 1886, and has accommodation for one hundred and forty patients.

It has been said that every Schwitzer is born with the idea of a new society in his head. That is, of course, the ironical way of expressing what comes very near being a truth. For what is the central thought and principle of Swiss life but that of a society for mutual aid and well-being? This idea is so vital and fundamental, and every Swiss who can think and perceive is so well aware of the force that lies in his individual will, which is a live and potent factor in the State, that one cannot wonder at his falling into the habit of wanting to turn the dynamical quantity of his being to the best advantage. There may be something in this to laugh at, as there is in everything when pushed to an extreme; nevertheless, this same quality has been the incentive to many an effort that has resulted in movements and organisations, like that of the Red Cross, that have been of incalculable importance.

The Red Cross Society itself, world-wide in the reach of its beneficence, owes its inception to the Society of Public Utility, the kindly parent of so many good works. The first to conceive the idea appears to have been M. Dunant, a Genevese physician, who published a startling account of what he had witnessed in two military hospitals

on the field of Solferino, and, together with his friend M. Moynier, president of the local Society of Public Utility, started an agitation, which spread rapidly over Europe, in favour of what they termed "neutralising the sick-waggon" on the field of battle. The idea was taken up so enthusiastically, and was pressed with such earnestness upon the various governments of Europe that eventually, with the full concurrence of the Powers, a conference was summoned at the instance of the Swiss Federal Council. It met, very fittingly, at Geneva in August, 1864, and the Convention of Geneva was drawn up and signed as an international code on the 22d of that month. Everyone knows the aim and scope of the Convention, and what a noble work it set on foot. The international association known as the Red Cross Society was established as a corollary to the Geneva Convention. Several conferences in connection with it have since been held, but except in certain matters of detail this code for in some measure humanising warfare remains as originally agreed to by the leading Powers.

An equally useful organisation, though on a lowlier plane, is that of the association known as *Les Amies de la jeune fille*, founded some thirty years ago, and now having its branches all over the world. The intention of this society is to extend protecting care to girls and young women who have to go away from home, and who, in arriving in strange places, need a friendly hand to

guide and welcome them. So well has the idea been carried out that the association has agents and correspondents everywhere; one of its *protégées* going to Borneo, China, or Japan would travel, as it were, under the ægis of these *Amies de la jeune fille*, and find their welcome at the end of the journey. This organisation, which is under Protestant auspices, has had a friendly emulator since 1897 in the *Œuvre Catholique de protection de la jeune fille*, an association based wholly on the lines of the elder society.

Next to infancy and youth, old age lays claim to the attention of Swiss philanthropy. Nor does it ask in vain, as is proved by the long list of charitable institutions specially reserved for the aged which are to be found in every canton of the Confederation. The canton of Basel alone possesses six asylums for the aged, infirm, and incurable, besides a general fund for widows and orphans, which is one of the oldest philanthropic organisations in Switzerland. The canton of Geneva, never behind in these matters, has two such institutions for the aged, one at Anières, with one hundred and fifty pensioners averaging seventy years of age, and another, supported by the State, at Petit-Saconnex. The rules of the latter contain a clause which is probably unique in such institutions; at least, I have never heard of anything of the kind elsewhere. It is that the pensioners themselves appoint one of the members of the committee of administration.

The canton of Vaud is equally thoughtful of its aged poor, but it manages matters in a different way. The Government supports an organisation for the care of those of its old people who are infirm, or suffering from incurable disease, and there is, besides, a "society for the succour of poor persons hopelessly afflicted," with about one hundred and fifty persons always on its books. But both these organisations, instead of maintaining special establishments, place their patients out in private families. There is, however, at Chailly, near Lausanne, an asylum of the general type for old people of both sexes, *pauvre et malheureux*. It is needless to mention other institutions of the kind; they abound in all the cantons, to the number, in all, of eighty-one, some private, others State-supported, some connected with religious organisations, others not.

This consideration of the work which is being done in Switzerland in the domain of philanthropy would be incomplete without some reference to a class of institutions of which during the last few years we have heard a good deal in England, thanks mainly to the enlightened initiative of the King, who, becoming acquainted with the useful work such establishments were doing in Germany, called the attention of some of our leading physicians to them. I refer to the sanatoria conducted specially for the benefit of persons suffering from tuberculosis. For patients to derive the greatest possible benefit from them it is

necessary that these institutions should be built in situations where the air is of the purest, and also of the driest, and where it is made delightful by the plenteous beams of the sun. The poor, unaided, cannot afford to go to such places, and so philanthropy in Switzerland has stepped in and opened a number of sanatoria, intended specially for those whom Providence has confided to its care and charge.

The sanatorium at Heiligenschwendli, in the canton of Berne, is said to be the first establishment of its kind on the Continent of Europe. It was originally thought that these places must be all the better for their purpose the higher they were put, and so that of Heiligenschwendli appears at a height of 1140 metres above the sea. There are several higher still, including one at Leysin (canton of Vaud), at a height of 1450 metres, one at Davos (1160 metres), and a third at Braunwald in the canton of Glarus at an altitude of 1180 metres. Zurich also supports a sanatorium at Wald, and Neuchâtel one at Malvilliers. The latter is due to the generous initiative of M. Russ-Suchard. Following the example of the canton of Vaud, Thurgau recently decided to celebrate the centenary of its independence by a collection in aid of a sanatorium for the poor, while a Genevan committee has acquired, for the same purpose, an extensive site at Clairmont-sur-Sierre, in the Valaisan commune of Randogne.

A Swiss writer, in a recent article, says: "The

strength of a religion is not shown in being politic, in being scientific, or even in being philanthropic." Such may be the case; yet the truly religious will probably always regard philanthropy as one of the fairest fruits of religion. At any rate, it is a very practical outcome of the religion of the Swiss.





CHAPTER VII

NATIONAL INDUSTRY

SWITZERLAND throughout is a perfect hive of industry. Practically speaking, everybody works. There is no idle class, or if there be, it is of very small dimensions. Most of the older cities are the homes of a high-stepping and well-to-do aristocracy, as well as of a roll of burghesses proud of their antique franchise or of newly acquired rights, which they well know how to defend *inguibus et rostro* against any and all encroachments of power. But though the aristocrat lives in his narrow circle, and often suffers from a limited range of intellectual views, he is not, or rarely, an idle burner of the oil of life. Such is the stir and activity of thought and being in the little Republic that all are drawn into it, as into the Dance whereof Holbein, or another, has left us his parable, still to be seen, at least in part, in the Mediæval Museum at Basel. Aristocrat and burgher alike, equally with the artisan, are swept into the general current, and do their turn in the common mill.

The aristocracy of the French-speaking cantons

are especially public-spirited. They do not tie themselves up in a clique, as in most other countries, but, on the contrary, throw themselves with much spirit into public business. Indeed, it may be said with truth that they have, as a rule, shown themselves much more beneficent and active in well-doing than proud and egoistic. Conservative by nature and training, they have been among the stoutest guardians, not merely of old-time privileges and customs, but of the worthiest traditions of generosity and honour. Accustomed to the management of affairs, they have filled, in general with probity and devotion, the highest offices of the State. Nor have they, as a rule, despite some narrowness and many prejudices, forfeited the respect of other classes.

As regards the privileges and prejudices of birth and station, perhaps the aristocracy of the older cantons will bear the palm, but they are no less public-spirited than their compatriots of the *Wülsch* cantons, and they have furnished as many illustrious men to the public service, if not to the sciences and arts, as those living nearer the current of French life. The same, or even more, may be said of the burgess class. Originally as exclusive, and well-nigh as haughty, as the man who styled himself "noble," the burgher earlier ranged himself in line with the common life, pushed thereto by the force of circumstances, and broadening his intelligence with his horizon, was thus enabled to play a part second

to none in the progress and development of the country.

Not only in manufacture and commerce, but in every department of national activity, the sons of the *bourgeoisie* enlist their intelligence and energy, and, it may be added, leave their familiar mark. For, if carried on in a right spirit, and with that devotion to high principle which is the aim of all honest workers, there is no training-school in the world better than that of business, not only for the conduct of affairs generally, but for statesmanship and politics. Such, at all events, is the lesson of Swiss annals, some of the best, if not the major part of the statesmen, reformers, administrators, industrial leaders, and inventors, as well as the theologians, scientists, and inventors, who have stamped their impress on the country's history, having sprung from that class.

Under their direction Swiss industry may be said to have taken its place with the foremost in the world, considered, that is, from the standpoint of population and opportunity. For it must be borne in mind that Switzerland is one of the poorest countries in Europe as regards natural resources. Yet the Swiss are among the "best-off," materially and socially, of perhaps any Continental people. They are divided by no glaring inequalities of wealth. The rich are not very rich, nor are the poor very poor; the pauper being, in fact, almost as rare as the millionaire. The thriftless and imbecile do, unfortunately, exist, and it

cannot be said that Switzerland has not its problem of poverty; but it is a very different thing there from what it is in other countries. There is work for all who will work, and fair pay. But labour is organised as in few other countries. It is also protected, for the workman, having his hand on the political machine, knows how to exercise his power for his own and the common advantage; what is good for the bee, as the emperor-philosopher puts it, being also, as he sees, good for the swarm.

The result is that, though there are some small class distinctions, they militate but little against a very marked general equality. The only social barriers of any account are those of culture and refinement, and they, of course, will always exist, however democratic a society may be. But the lines are never sharply drawn, and class merges into class with almost imperceptible gradations. The condition of things one meets with in this respect almost throughout Switzerland is very closely akin to what exists in the Western Highlands, where the poor and the well-to-do are on close terms of intimacy, the newly rich and the purse-proud being the only exceptions. I am speaking here more particularly of the towns, in which a very fair level of intelligence and culture prevails, arising in part from the educational advantages common to all, and in part from the softening of the manners and the sharpening of the wits produced by the industrial arts.

This is particularly the case in Geneva, which may be said to lead the industry of *la Suisse romande*. Geneva's specialty lies in the manufacture of musical-boxes, jewellery, and watches, with which must be included timepieces. For some two hundred years, or more, the ancient city has been engaged in the making of watches, and though its business has of late years been considerably injured by American and English competition, it still does a considerable trade in that department, employing a large number of men. In Geneva the art of the jeweller is closely allied with that of the watchmaker, the Geneva watch, *par excellence*, being a highly finished and exquisitely decorated piece of workmanship, a jewel first, as one might say, and a timekeeper afterwards. It is an education in art to spend half a day in the streets of Geneva, studying the beautiful things, the manufacture of the city, that are displayed in the windows of its shops. Only after doing so, and perhaps visiting one of its many workshops, is one in a position to understand the superior quality of artisan everywhere to be met with in this city built on the "Rock of Predestination," as Michelet wittily puts it. Not all its workmen, however, are employed in the shops, many of the best working in their own homes, and showing fine traits of independence.

But even more important than Geneva in connection with the watch-making industry is the canton of Neuchâtel. Established in the first

instance at Locle, in the early part of the eighteenth century, by Daniel Jean Richard, a man of rare mechanical genius, the new industry soon spread to the neighbouring village of Chaux-de-Fonds, and thence in the course of a few years to many a poverty-stricken mountain village, not only in Neuchâtel, but in the neighbouring cantons of Soleure and Berne. If you want to see how watches are made, and under what, on the whole, happy circumstances they are produced, go to one or both of these notable towns, the larger, Chaux-de-Fonds, being perhaps the most elevated manufacturing centre in the world, standing, as it does, at an altitude of 3274 feet above the sea. It has a population of twenty-seven thousand, a large proportion of them engaged in the staple manufacture. As at Locle, with about half the population of Chaux-de-Fonds, the watch- and clock-making industry is carried on very largely in the homes of the workers, although not to the same extent as formerly. The work is very much subdivided, each man usually confining his attention to one piece of the machinery. Those who prepare the simpler parts will earn from two and a half francs a day upwards, while those who do the adjusting, finishing, and engraving, etc., make as much as ten francs a day. The workmen are usually well-to-do, living in neat little houses, set in the midst of gardens of from half an acre to an acre in extent. There is nothing of the slovenly, slouchy look so often characteristic

or provincial artisans about these men. They are bright, alert, intelligent, and bring out their French not only correctly, but with something of Parisian refinement and polish. One sees in these blue-bloused workmen what education and proper conditions of living can do to refine and elevate even the lowly sons of toil. I am told that the annual output of watches, the manufacture of Chaux-de-Fonds, Locle, and the neighbouring villages, amounts to something like three hundred thousand, having a value of thirty-six million francs.

To many of the villages in the Bernese Oberland and the Soleure Jura, watch- and clock-making has proved a by-industry of the utmost importance, lifting the inhabitants, in many instances, if not to affluence, at least out of the depths of poverty. The pursuit of husbandry, yielding a precarious return at best in those mountainous parts, leaves many hours that would be otherwise unoccupied but for this and other kindred employments for the long nights. It is in this respect in particular that the Swiss have shown themselves so wise and so thrifty. In nearly every part of the country, in the houses of the peasants and workers, we see some by-industry going on. Here it is musical-boxes or watch-making, there wood-carving, or what not.

Many years ago Christian Fisher established a school of wood-carving at Brienz, and such was the good fruit it bore that, not only here, but at

near-lying Meiringen, and in many remote mountain villages, especially in the Haslithal, the industry took root and freed the people from the pressure of a stinted and precarious livelihood. Toys, caskets, flowers, animals, forks and spoons, book-slides, chairs and tables, parqueterie, and, indeed, wood-carving of every description, come in rich abundance from the hands of these peasant artists and find a ready sale. A few years ago some twenty-five thousand persons were said to be engaged in this industry, and since then the number has probably largely increased. Recently the Bernese Oberland has added another branch of art-work to those it had before prosecuted, namely, the production of polished and inlaid slabs for table-tops, etc., from the indigenous red stone and marbles of the country.

What watch- and clock-making are to West Switzerland, the silk and cotton industries are to the eastern cantons. The silk manufacture was first established in Zurich by Huguenot refugees in the seventeenth century, and from thence it quickly spread into the surrounding villages. The industry is not now what it was in former days; but it still occupies many thousands of hands in the city, and on both sides of the lake, as well as in the Zurich Oberland, especially in the villages surrounding or in the neighbourhood of the small Pfäffikon See. Into the latter empties a powerful little stream, known as the Aa, which in the course of a league's run drives so

many silk and other mills that, by way of jest, it is styled the *Millionenbach*, or, as we might say, the "millionaire stream."

But though large numbers work in the mills in this district, the hum of the hand-loom is heard on every side in the cottages. Here, too, as a feature of Swiss industry, it may be noted that, hand in hand with the silk and other industries, is carried on an active trade in milk and its products; those who have a little land, and most workers have, finding no difficulty in following the two occupations together. Nothing is so remarkable in Switzerland as the universality of gardens amongst working men in most of the towns and villages and the admirable use they make of them. And in the district of which I am now speaking—that is, the Zurich Oberland—the gardens of the working people, especially those of Wald, Rütli, and Wetzikon, are celebrated as among the neatest and best-cultivated to be found anywhere.

The ground silk has lost, here and elsewhere in Switzerland, cotton has gained; but while Zurich is an important centre of this industry, and possesses many cotton factories, it is surpassed in the number of hands engaged in the work by other districts. Near-lying Glarus has extensive manufactures of cotton and printed muslin. It used to do a large trade in dyed goods with the East; but for many years the Glarner merchant and manufacturer has had to look to other quarters for a

market. However, he is one of the most pushing and successful of Swiss traders, and when one market fails it is not long before he finds another. Cotton-spinning was introduced into this little mountain canton early in the eighteenth century by Heidegger, one of its village pastors, much to the annoyance of Zurich, which was not so broad-minded then as it is now; and soon the whole population was spinning for the manufactories of St. Gall, Herisau, Toggenburg, and elsewhere.

The canton of St. Gall may be said to be the headquarters of the Swiss cotton industry, as well as of the allied one of embroidery, which occupies thousands of female workers in this part of Switzerland. Much of the embroidery work is done by machinery, but there is still a very large quantity turned out by hand. Appenzell is specially noted for its productiveness in this respect, its women being gifted above almost all others in these parts for their deftness and taste in this delicate art. The picture of the fields about St. Gall and along the Toggenburg Valley, white with the webs spread out to bleach, is not more common nor more surprising to the stranger than that of the Appenzellerin seated before her embroidery frame in the shade and amid the flowers of her garden. It may, indeed, be said of these diligent workers, as it is sometimes said of the hand-loom silk-weavers of the Zurich Oberland—for there are still a multitude of such—that many a fair maiden, many a young wife, works youth

and beauty, and often even life itself, into the rich material, the product of her delicate fingers.

Embroidery is to East Switzerland very much what watch-making is to West Switzerland, and it employs probably an equal number of the population. Fifty thousand persons are said to be so engaged, chiefly in St. Gall, Appenzell, and parts of the canton of Zurich. How varied and beautiful the product is only those can know who have seen it. The output has been steadily increasing for many years, and it finds a market not only all over the Continent, but in both North and South America. As in respect to other branches of industry, so in this, too, the Swiss find it worth their while to establish schools for instruction, in order that there may be no falling back, or fatal lagging behind the fashion. There is also a museum of embroidery in St. Gall, which is well worth seeing. Apart from any merely industrial value, it need hardly be pointed out how all this tends in the direction of artistic culture and general refinement.

Even more important than the embroidery industry in East Switzerland, so far as the numbers of employes is concerned, is that connected with the manufacture of silk in its various forms. The chief centres of the trade are Basel and Zurich, but there is also a considerable amount of ribbon-weaving done in Aarau, which is likewise the centre of an important straw-plaiting and embroidering industry. Ribbons are the principal

product of the Basel looms. There the factory system chiefly prevails, and the factory type of physique is perhaps more noticeable among its population than in almost any other part of Switzerland. In Zurich, also, power-loom weaving is largely in vogue, and it has been on the increase of late years; but there are still, it is said, between twenty and thirty thousand hand-loomns at work, many of them being distributed through the villages round the lake—another instance of the prevalence of home industries among this busy and thrifty people.

Cotton-weaving and printing employ between twenty-four and twenty-five thousand hands, and there is some little woollen and linen manufacture carried on in various parts. The manufacture of woollen goods is confined chiefly to the cantons of Glarus, Zurich, Berne, Soleure, and Basel-land; and flax-spinning centres mainly in Berne. There is, however, a very considerable amount of linen-weaving still done—for home use—in the Alpine valleys, where the pleasant hum of the spinning-wheel may yet be heard in many of the mountain cottages, and, as the song says—

“ The good wife’s shuttle merrily
Goes flashing through the loom.”

I might refer to other industries—that, for instance, of shoe-making in Soleure, the manufacture of machinery in Winterthur and elsewhere,

the weaving and embroidery of muslins in Appenzell-ausser-Rhoden, the condensed milk industry of Vaud and other parts, the manufacture of tobacco and cigars (from the native-grown plant) chiefly in Vaud and Aargau. The cultivation of the fragrant weed is confined in the main to the valleys of the Rhone, the Aar, the Broye, and the Ticino. It does not amount to much in total bulk, and the tendency is to decrease rather than the reverse. Still, it gives employment to a goodly number of persons, especially in the pretty villages of the Seethal, where the peasants have become deft-handed at cigar-making as well as at straw-plaiting.





CHAPTER VIII

THE CULTURE OF THE VINE

“ Im kühlen Keller sitz’ ich hier
Auf einem Fass voll Reben,
Bin frohen Muts und lasse mir
Vom Allerbesten geben.
Der Küfer zieht den Heber voll,
Gehorsam meiner Winke,
Reicht mir das Glas, ich halt’s empor,
Und trinke, trinke, trinke.”

THAT is a verse of one of the songs in praise of the grape and its juice, well-known and often sung by the sons of this land of the vine. I have spoken in the preceding chapter of many branches of industry, but none of them perhaps can go back to so ancient a date in this country as that of the manufacture of wine. The cultivation of the vine among the Swiss—as amongst other peoples in the countries native to the vine—is by many held to be the ideal employment. How many of the toilers in town and city, who have perhaps in their early years known something of the life and work among the vines, sigh from time to time as they drag through the hot

and dusty streets, and hie them in imagination to the vine-clad slopes of the Rhine Valley of Graubünden, or the terraced shores of Lake Lemman, where it is their ambition to end their days in the classic employ!

But, beautiful and idyllic as is the picture fancy paints for them, stern reality sooner or later tells them that the occupation of their dreams is not all that it was. The last decade of the century has made a sad change, brought about chiefly by the ravages of the phylloxera and other insect plagues. Previous to their arrival upon the scene the vine-grower was in a better position to make both ends meet than he is now. Like the man in the fable, he could say:

“ À la fin
J'attrape le bout de l'année :
Chaque jour amène son pain.”

As the times go to-day it is not always an easy matter for the cultivator of the grape to emulate the cheese-mite, and make both ends meet for a fresh spring. Bad seasons, lack of capital, not unfrequently a spell of sickness, stand in the way of success. Then the vine-grower is apt to be a little behind the times. He does not always act up to the latest science. Indeed, it is not unusual to find him sceptical about scientific novelties, as about new things in general; for your cultivator of the soil is, like the nature he is so much in company with, old-fashioned in his ways,

in short, a great conservative; and the Swiss cultivator is no exception to the rule.

Still, the times change, and in the more progressive cantons better methods take the place of the old cut-and-dried systems of viticulture. Even in somewhat stick-fast old Valais things move. It were sad, indeed, if they did not, seeing that the fruit of the vine forms the staple of the canton's wealth and well-being. Backward as the Valais peasant is, and narrow as is his outlook, he has been wise enough of late years to reinvigorate his old stocks by the introduction of the Burgundy, the Tokay, and the Johannesburg vines, with the result that he is now able, when September comes round, not only to send into the market rich golden clusters for the table, but also good refreshing wine that is in no way inferior to that coming from the birth-lands of the grape, albeit this cannot be said of all his output.

The above-named, however, are not the only wines produced in Valais. The Arvine and the Amigue, excellent white wines, are among the good old "stand-bys" of the country, and are greatly relished by those who have become familiar with their tang and flavour. Some of the commoner stocks, grown in most parts of Switzerland, thrive also in Valais. But it is strange to note that, like the people, the same vine has a tendency to vary in the different cantons; or if not the vine, at least the wine does. But need one wonder when the life of the people

is so different! There is one very peculiar feature that strikes the observant stranger in vagabondising about Valais. It reminds one a little of harvest-time in England. By reason of the urgent needs of the vine many of the poorer peasantry lead a nomadic life. In the springtime they come down from their remote mountain villages, bringing with them cattle, children, and half their household belongings, to make their temporary abode among the vineyards. Here they work until the beginning of summer, when they return home, with their cattle and their gear, until the grapes are ready to be plucked. Then the mountain road sees and welcomes them once more. The children toddle along with laugh and shout, the cattle feed as they go, men and women bend under loads of "needful things"; but the way is comparatively light now, because it is the laughing, luscious grapes that have to be gathered. This changeful nature of the toil, according to season, has led to a peculiar feature in some of the Valais communes, there being in each three villages, all in turn vivid with activity, and then empty and desolate as the winds.

Much lighter is the labour at the grape-gathering than in the spring. In the earlier season it is often dangerous in the extreme, for the vineyards have frequently to be irrigated by means of wooden conduits, miles in length, through which the muddy water of the glaciers is conveyed to the thirsty roots of the vines. It grows warm and

“living” as it flows through the troughs, and, with the sediment thus brought along, proves very grateful to the grape-bearing stocks. The resulting wine ought to be good, for no one knows, save those who are engaged therein, how perilous is the work of arranging and fixing these conduits. They have frequently to be carried along dizzy heights and over dangerous ravines, and, often enough, when least thought of, the avalanche will come and carry them away. Then, if the vines are not to perish, they must be restored; and so great is the peril of life and limb thus encountered that repairs are rarely made without the priest being present with the sacrament in case of need.

About 1.6 per cent. of the soil under cultivation in Switzerland is devoted to the culture of the grape. It flourishes to the best advantage in the cantons of Vaud, Neuchâtel, Zurich, and generally in the larger river valleys. The only cantons in which the vine is not cultivated to some extent are those of Schwyz, Appenzell, and Unterwalden. Tessin has the largest area under viticulture, its vineyards in all covering something like thirty-two square miles. Vaud comes next with twenty-one square miles, and Zurich follows with twenty square miles. Vaud is, perhaps, the most noted for its vine-culture, its connection with the industry being of very ancient date. The walled terraces lining the hills above the Lake of Geneva, devoted to the cultivation of

the vine, are a sight to behold. "You seem to have built them to last for all eternity," remarked one day an American to an old Vaudois *vigneron*. "What would you?" he replied. "Are we not eternally thirsty?"

Each canton has its peculiar customs in connection with the vintage. Some may be dying out, others linger. In out-of-the-way parts of Vaud, I am told, it is still the custom for the overseer to claim a kiss from the young woman who, in plucking, allows a bunch to escape her eye, for

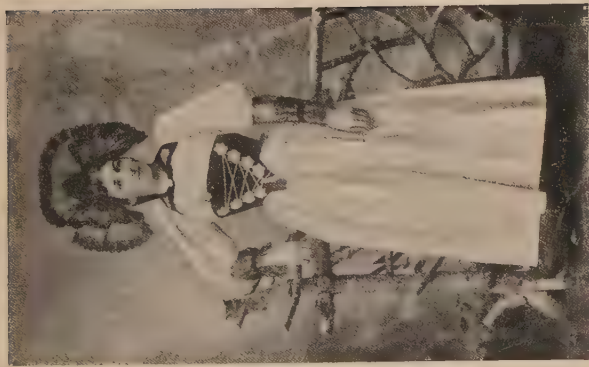
"they are soft, and should be singly stripped
From off the branch by maiden's dainty hand."

Times are changing, however, and now it is rare for the daughters of the peasant cultivator to stay at home and help at the vintage. They find better employment in other branches of industry—in teaching, in millinery, in service in the towns, etc. Hence the cultivator is obliged to have recourse to hired labour, and so finds it harder to make his toil pay. Such is not always the case, however. An interesting exception was brought to light the other day, when a poor *vigneron*, suddenly stricken with illness, as well as the elder members of his family, was grievously afflicted to see the beautiful days passing away while he was unable to do the work required in his little vineyard. However, a dozen of his neighbours, seeing his unhappy position, although each had

enough work of his own, went and banked up his vines for him, and, indeed, did all that was pressingly needful — an act which, as the poor fellow remarked, did him more good than a batch of doctors could. And verily one can believe it!

Vevey may be said to be the centre of the vine industry of Canton Vaud. There an ancient guild exists, known as *l'Abbaye des Vignerons*, whose mission it is to promote the cultivation of the vine. Every year it sends out "cunning men" into the surrounding country to view the vineyards, to see whose vines are the best dressed, and whose stocks produce the best grapes and the noblest wine. Then, in accordance with this report, various prizes are awarded, medals, *serpes d'honneur* (pruning-hooks), etc. Moreover, every ten or fifteen years a great festival is held, called *la Fête des Vignerons*, possibly a relic of old Roman times, when the feast of Bacchus was very religiously observed, and no doubt duly enjoyed.

Anyway, it is known that in the neighbouring village of Cully, on the margin of the lake, the Romans had a temple to Father Bacchus, an inscribed stone referring to it having been discovered there. Cully is the centre of a district famed for a special *crue* of wine named Lavaux. It is made from a grape noted for its luscious qualities, and—need it be said?—a great temptation to boys. Well do I recall the gleam of delight which used to come into the eyes of a venerable *huissier* of Geneva, a native of the Lavaux region, whenever



A WOMAN OF THE CANTON OF BERNE



A GRAPE-GATHERER OF VAUD

mention was made of the grapes of Cully. "The grapes of Cully!" he would exclaim. "Many 's the time I 've run the risk of a dose of salt in my legs for taking them without leave!" And then he would go on to explain that it used to be permissible—it may be still, for aught I know—for the cultivator who found boys among his vines taking the grapes to discharge at their legs a shot-gun loaded with salt in place of pellets. The practice was, I believe, common in other parts of Switzerland besides Canton Vaud, and may have had the effect of checking the inroads of the timorous. But for the bold of heart, what was a little smarting in the legs!

Besides the Lavaux above mentioned, Vaud produces La Côte, Dézalay, Montreux, Ville-neuve, and Yvorne. The best-known wines of Valais are Dôle, Coquimper, La Marque, Anniviers, and Vin du Glacier, so called from the fact that the inhabitants of the Val d'Anniviers store their vats in cellars built high up in the mountains. From Visp (in Valais) to Montreux and Geneva the wine chiefly produced is white. White wine is grown very largely, too, on the shores of the Lake of Neuchâtel and around the Lake of Biel, although these districts yield a good red wine as well. White wines are also produced at the northern end of the Lake of Constance, along the Rhine Valley, from the mouth of the Aar as far as Basel, and on both sides of the Lake of Zurich.

The most notable districts for red wines, however, are the vine-lands of Schaffhausen and the contiguous wine-growing districts of Zurich and Thurgau. Tessin likewise produces a good red wine; but the Italian canton has suffered from the introduction of American stocks, which yield a poor crop, although I have tasted a native wine of the Italian canton equal to the best Chianti.

Among the better-known red wines coming from the German cantons are Hallaüer from Schaffhausen, Neftenbacher from Zurich, and Goldwändler from Aargau. One should mention also the Einsiedeln brand, Leutschen, the produce of the celebrated vineyard belonging to the monks of that ilk. Who, moreover, that has lived among the Swiss but has heard of the famous *Schweizer Blut* (Swiss blood) produced from vines grown in the neighbourhood of St. Jakob, in the valley of the Birs, near Basel, where, in 1444, fifteen hundred Swiss withstood a French army of twentyfold their strength, and although they left all but fifty of their number dead on the field, thrice their numbers of the enemy shared the honour of their burial? *Schweizer Blut* ought surely to be a good and invigorating wine.

The principal stocks favoured in Switzerland are the Clävner, the White Traminer, the Rauching, and the Elbing. From the first-named nearly all the red wines of the northern and eastern cantons are produced, as well as those of Neuchâtel. Only in Tessin and the southern valleys of Grau-

bünden is red wine manufactured from any other grape. The White Traminer is grown almost exclusively in the cantons of Vaud and Geneva; it is met with also in Valais and in the rural half-canton of Basel-land. The Rauching is cultivated chiefly on the shores of the Lake of Zurich and in the Simmenthal, while the Elbing, a white-wine stock, is confined for the most part to the cantons of Schaffhausen, Thurgau, and Basel, although it is cultivated likewise in what are known as the "wine-lands" near Zurich. In addition to these vines, others are here and there to be met with of less note, though perhaps equally noteworthy. Besides the *Vitis latrusca*, or wild vine, of Tessin, there is the Riesling, from which a very delicate wine is made, and the Rèze, from which is produced the Vin du Glacier.

It is worthy of note that the culture of the vine in Switzerland is carried on at a loftier altitude than in any other part of Europe, barring Savoy and the Maritime Alps in the south of France. In Valais the grape is grown to the elevation of nine hundred metres.

It is estimated that the average annual production of wine in Switzerland amounts to nearly a million and a half hectolitres. And yet the quantity produced is not sufficient to supply the needs of the population! Certain it is that a very large quantity is imported—from fifteen to sixteen million gallons annually, according to the returns. These foreign wines, say the natives, who prefer

their own *crue*, are chiefly for foreigners. And they sometimes tell you interesting stories—the inn-keepers, that is—illustrative of the little foreigners know about good wine. They will tell you, for instance, how an English “Mylor,” or an American millionaire, rejected a certain wine set before him because it was not sufficiently high-priced; but when the same wine was served with another label, and at four times the price, he smacked his lips over it, and said it was “fine.” Good stories, though not exactly new. But the Swiss do not indulge in this kind of thing nowadays so much as they did formerly. There are some sixteen thousand hotel-keepers in Switzerland, and they know who butter their bread.





CHAPTER IX

LIFE AND WORK IN THE ALPS

WHILE various branches of industry occupy the energies of the Swiss people, one is pre-eminent, insomuch that it may be called the national industry. I refer to the various forms of husbandry comprised in agriculture and pastoral pursuits generally. Of agriculture, properly so-called, there is comparatively little in Switzerland, and that little is very largely confined to the wide plateau that runs from east to west, from the Lake of Constance to the Lake of Geneva. The cereal produce is so small that it would not suffice for the needs of the population without the aid of large supplies from abroad. The climate and the nature of the ground militate against agriculture in this form. But what the Swiss farmer misses in such respects he makes up for in the direction of cattle-breeding, cheese-making, and other allied pursuits. Reference has elsewhere been made to the extent and importance of the cheese-manufacture carried on in the Gruyère district and in the Emmenthal and neighbouring vales. Many of these extensive valleys, together with

their uplands, constitute almost ideal places for the rearing of cattle and for the products of the dairy.

But there are other parts where the activity of the husbandman is confined to much narrower limits, and where the results of his labour are in consequence not only less fruitful, but of a far more precarious nature. I refer to the husbandman of the "alps," properly so-called. When once the broad central tableland of Switzerland is passed, and we begin to ascend towards the higher regions which terminate in the peaks of perpetual snow, nearly all that is not bare rock is rough heath and pasture-land. These mountain pastures, or "alps," are common property, and upon them all those of the commune to which they belong have the right to feed their cattle. The right, however, has its restrictions, each pasture being divided into so many *Stösse*, according to the number of cows it can support, and no one is allowed more than a fair share of such pasturage.

The traveller in the Alps is often struck by the almost total absence of cattle in the neighbourhood of the villages. His hotel or pension is regularly supplied with the most delicious milk and cream, but for any evidence as to whence they are derived he may look in vain, unless his curiosity leads him to explore some of the higher valleys, generally far remote from the beaten track. About the houses in the valley he will see the peasant, aided by all the members of his family,

down even to the tiniest child capable of holding a rake, busy in his little garden or in the near-lying meadow. From the earliest dawn of day to the last gleam of twilight all must be at work; for, the summer being short, everything depends upon getting in the crops while the sun shines.

In these upland regions, where a man's wealth, like that of the patriarchs of old, is measured by the number of his cattle, and the produce derived from them, the first essential is a plentiful supply of hay; because during the long winter months the cattle have to be carefully housed and fed upon the yield of the summer meadows. Nature is bounteously helpful to this end, some of the lower and better pastures giving two and even three crops of grass in the year. If, however, the hay-crop is usually plentiful and good, that of grain is too often the very reverse. The stalk is invariably short, and the ear miserly. It is generally grown in such small patches, too, that a stranger is apt to wonder what can be the use of planting it. But herein lies one of the marvels of Swiss life in some of the remoter valleys. On his little holding, together with his rights in the *Allmend*—that is, land held in common, whether arable or pasture, meadow or forest—the peasant and his family depend almost wholly. Hence he plants his patch of wheat, his patch of barley, or oats; he grows enough potatoes for his household and his pigs; while from his little fields of hemp and flax are not infrequently woven the family

linen and the dresses of the women—the work of the latter during the long winter nights, when there is little else to be done. Even his own rough brown homespun may be the produce of his home-grown sheep. In short, the greater part of what he and his family eat and wear is the result of the common toil. Few who have not seen it can imagine what this means in varied and never-ending industry—one may say, in never-ending contest with nature. It is an everlasting surprise to those who know what the life is. But though wonderful as an evidence of what human energy and human effort can do, such an unceasing strain on the vital powers has its tragic side. This is seen in the women prematurely bent and old, in the often stunted forms of children whose young faces reflect the sober kindness and the mature wisdom of age, rather than the sportfulness and gaiety of youth.

Much of the toil of this laborious form of agriculture falls upon the frailer members of the family. While the husband is away, perhaps acting as guide or porter to a group of climbers, or with the cattle on the higher pastures, the wife may be seen toiling in sun or shower in the bit of garden, hoeing, weeding, or, with the help of a younger member of the family, distributing the carefully accumulated manure among the growing crops. Nothing is allowed to go to waste in the sordid economy of the Swiss peasant. The drainings of cow-sheds, pig-sties, and dung-hills, the

scatterings of fowl-houses—all are parsimoniously saved, and, when the proper time arrives, are carried out in the tubs in which they have been stored to the needy crops.

So much of this kind of work is done by the women that strangers are apt to think that the men must be a lazy lot. But there are numberless duties to keep the men otherwise engaged. The timber needed about the farm, and the wood for firing, have to be got in from the forest. Much of this work belongs to the winter ; but as there are then often weeks upon weeks when little or nothing can be done outdoors because of the snow, care has to be taken during the good weather to see that the stock of firing does not run short. Hence, under the broad eaves of every well-conditioned peasant's cottage will be seen a plentiful store of carefully sawn and dried wood ready for the stove.

The chief occupation of the men during the open months, however, is with the cattle in the higher pastures. As soon as the snow has gone and the young grass begins to shoot the cattle are taken up from the villages to the lower hill pastures. This preliminary start for the mountains usually takes place early in May, until which time the snow generally lasts. On these lower altitudes, moving from place to place as the supply of food requires, the herds remain until about the second week in June, when they are driven still higher up the mountains, from which

the snow now gradually retires, until it is seen upon the higher peaks and in deep gullies alone. Here they remain for about a month, and then again the cry is "Upwards!" the highest pastures being reached early in July.

The start for the mountains is one of the festive events of the Alpine year, and it is made the occasion of much rejoicing. Those who accompany the herds, which sometimes number two hundred head, and even more, will be accompanied for some distance on the way by friends and neighbours, with music and song. Such sights are very pleasing, for no one can rejoice, in their simple way, more heartily than these people do. To hear a company of these herdsmen and mountaineers sing, with full throat, their native songs, that seem to breathe the very air and fragrance of the mountains, is a thing never to be forgotten; and the charm is greatly heightened if the song be accompanied by the multitudinous tinkle of the cow-bells.

When heard close at hand, the sound of these *Trychlen*, as they are called in the German tongue, is too much of a jangle to be quite pleasant; but get them at a distance of a few hundred yards, and it is astonishing how softened and harmonised they have become. In place of a discord, in which different tones jar one against the other, the ear detects only a sweet accord, in which the various notes, falling each and all into their due place, produce a most pleasing melody. And

Life and Work in the Alps 123

when to this simple accompaniment a number of voices sing, making the chorus echo and re-echo amongst the hills, the effect is exceedingly fine. This Alpine music is best appreciated in such songs as *Kuhreihen beim Aufzug auf die Alp*—that is, *Ranz des Vaches*, on the departure for the mountain pastures. The first stanza is as follows :

“ Der Ustig mott cho, der Schnee zerzeit scho,
Der Himmel is blaue ; der Gugger het g'schraue,
Der Maye syg cho. Allihoh !
Lustig use'n-us em Stall mit de lube Chüehne !
Uesi schöni Zyt isch cho, Luft u Freiheit wartet scho
Dinne uf de Flüehne.

Allihoh ! 'Tra-la-la ! ”

I will not pretend to translate. Let those read who can. It is good homely Swiss, in which the singer rejoices that spring is come again, that the snow has gone, and the heavens are blue, and that in the beautiful weather he can enjoy the sweet air and freedom of the mountains with his beloved cattle, freeing his lungs the while with his lusty “ Allihoh ” and “ 'Tra-la-la ! ”

The native songs of this kind are very numerous, and not a few of them are exceedingly beautiful, touching in turn nearly every chord of the human heart. They are true folk-songs, giving free and spontaneous expression to the feelings, and so, as it were, live on the popular tongue. One cannot walk many miles through the villages,

or along the mountain paths, without hearing snatches of these effusions trolled out at full throat, the "jodel'd" choruses perhaps being taken up by other voices far fields away. Many of them are in praise of the herdsman's life, like that beginning—

"Es gibt wohl kein Leben, wie Kühers so schön."

Two of the stanzas run much as follows:

"No life like the herdsman's, so lusty and fair,
Breathing and joying the sweet mountain air ;
With the sun in the morning he rises and swells
With joy as he hears the gentle cow-bells.

"And sounds he his alp-horn, its music is borne
Away down the valleys on wings of the morn ;
He feels such accord with nature around,
It seems in the alp alone gladness is found."

The alp-horn, although it may be frequently heard, is not so commonly used as formerly. It is an uncouth instrument, consisting of a hollow tube of wood, wound round with the inner fibre of birch or other bark, and some six feet in length. It has but a small compass of notes; but when these are caught up and echoed back and forth by the rocky acclivities the effect is very striking. In the remoter mountain valleys the alp-horn is still used for the purpose of calling the cattle together, and in some of the higher alps, where no church-bell can be heard, it often

serves for proclaiming the vesper hour. The *Senn*, immediately the sun has set, raises his horn, and with it makes the mountainside resound with the first few notes of the psalm, "Praise ye the Lord." The sound is taken up from other alps, and the melodious echoes, repeated far and near, are the signal for all within hearing to uncover their heads and say their evening prayer. This done, the cattle are collected together for the night, and the herdsmen retire to their rest.

Not all the men of the villages go with the cattle to the higher pastures, but just enough to do the work that is required. And when it is said that there may be from one hundred to two hundred or more cows feeding on one pasture, and that they have to be milked morning and evening, and their milk turned into cheese, it will be easily understood that there is plenty to do. Besides the work of attending to the cows there are many things to be done, such as carrying wood from the forests, no light task, for these summer pastures are often considerably above the region where trees will grow.

One may have some idea of the altitude reached in ascending the mountains by taking note of the vegetation. The vine, as a rule, is not seen beyond an elevation of two thousand feet, although exceptions to the rule occur, especially in the canton of Valais. The oak, and with it wheat, ceases to thrive a thousand feet higher.

Barley may be seen as high as four thousand and even five thousand feet. The beech disappears at about the same altitude, leaving the pines and firs alone to enjoy the fresher and rarer atmosphere of the slopes and ridges from six thousand to seven thousand feet in height. Even here, where all tree-life ceases, it is astonishing to find how prolific vegetation is in the form of grass and flower. There is, perhaps, nothing in the world, of its kind, so beautiful as an Alpine meadow glistening with its numberless flowers. To enumerate them and name their colours would give no idea of the splendour of the picture they make. A Yorkshire moor, covered with heather, and stretching for miles, one blaze of purple, is a sight to make the heart leap after a period of absence. But the glow of one of these mountain pastures, especially in the spring and early summer, is entirely without parallel. No wonder the mountaineer says—

“ Wie viel Blumen auf den Auen,
Welch ein Singen, welch ein Ringen,
Welche Wonne hier ! ”

Pansies, anemones, gentians, the bluest of forget-me-nots, chrysanthemums, white and yellow, hare-bells, and, most beautiful of all, the hardy Alpine rose, not to mention scores of others, of the richest and most varied dyes, are seen mingled and waving together amongst the luscious grass in the wildest profusion. Of all these

the Alpine rose, a variety of rhododendron, and of a rich red colour, is the favourite flower of the Swiss, being regarded as an emblem of life and joy, while the pale edelweiss symbolises death and eternity. Like the latter, the *Alpenrösli*—to give it its pretty diminutive name—thrives only in the higher regions of the Alps; but it lives in the throng, and joins, as it were, in the general flower-choir, while the edelweiss dwells more or less alone and apart, affecting the barer rocks and ledges on the verge of the glaciers and close to the eternal snows.

Almost as numberless as the flowers, and many of them as beautiful, are the insect swarms that throng these solitudes. The butterflies are especially rich and varied. The flies, however, are a great pest, one in particular, popularly called *Breme*, leaving one little peace in certain localities. It is a sort of large horse-fly; but even among the cattle it is not so wild and vicious as at times on the Lake of Lucerne. This plague is one of the results of the thoughtless destruction of birds, which prevailed in all parts of the country until the Federal authorities took the matter up and passed a law for the protection of the feathered tribes.

Although the life of the *Senn*, or cowherd, has its idyllic side, it is a rude, rough, and very arduous existence. He lives hard, works hard, and lies hard. The *châlet* (in German *Sennhütte*) in which he dwells is literally a log cabin, formed

of trunks of pines, notched at the ends where they dovetail one into another. Its roof is low and nearly flat, and is heavily weighted with stones to keep its shingles from being blown away by sudden gusts of wind. Such structures serve their purpose as summer dwellings, when they are all the better, perhaps, for their free ventilation ; but they would be unendurable in the winter-time. The furniture they contain is of the most primitive description, consisting generally of but a table and a rude bench, with a cauldron in which to heat the milk, and the other necessary utensils for cheese-making. The bed that is provided seldom goes beyond a truss of hay.

Occasionally the owner of a number of cattle may go up to the higher pastures with his whole household, in which case, of course, there will be a roomier *châlet* and better provision for family living. This sort of domesticity in the summer alps, however, is rare, the work of taking care of the cattle and making the cheese being generally left to experienced *Sennen* and their assistants. In these cases—that is, when the cattle of a number of owners are all herded together—the cows of each are tried from time to time, generally once a week, to see how much milk they give. This is done so that the owners may be apportioned at the end of the season an amount of cheese proportionate to the yield of their kine, which in the best seasons and from the finest cows will average



IN THE SUMMER PASTURES

Life and Work in the Alps 129

as much as two hundredweights for the four months. The goats are treated in the same way. Goats, however, are kept in separate pastures, generally where the grass is sparser and more difficult to get at, on account of the precipitous nature of the ground. Sheep usually share the same pastures with the goats, and are often left for weeks together to seek out what scanty feed they can among the craggy ridges and well-nigh inaccessible slopes of the mountains.

The short season of the higher pastures soon comes to an end. At the most it lasts but seven or eight weeks, when a descent is made to what are called the middle pastures. Here the herds may remain a fortnight or three weeks to eat the after-grass, finally retiring to the lower vales during the early part of October. Towards the end of the month, sometimes before, winter begins his hard reign, heralded by fierce tempests and heavy downfalls of snow, which compel the close housing of all domestic cattle for many months to come.

It need hardly be said how arduous this life of the Alpine husbandman and his family is. It is indeed only those enjoying the most robust health who can stand it. In going among them one sees how strong and hearty many of them are ; one sees, too, how prematurely it ages both men and women. What is not seen on the surface, as it were, are the numbers the rigours of the life kill off before their time. Need one wonder,

then, that in Switzerland, as with us, there is a gradual, but increasing exodus from the rural districts into the towns, and that there, too, the newspapers are busy with the cause and the remedy ?





CHAPTER X

CANTONAL LIFE AND CHARACTER

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that during the past half-century there have been two main influences at work tending to unify the Swiss people, and so to break down the bounds of that narrower clannish or cantonal spirit which is, and ever has been, one of the distinguishing characteristics of life in Switzerland ; yet the broad lines of cantonal demarcation are as strongly felt to-day as they ever were. The two unifying influences I here refer to are those of the centralising tendency of the Federal autonomy and the easy means of communication between all parts of the Confederation. The latter in especial should, one would think, in time smooth out all the more violent differences of character which distinguish the people of the various cantons. Hitherto, however, neither of the influences named appears to have effected much in the direction indicated. Nor has the levelling-up process of popular education done a great deal to that end. But that, perhaps, was not to be expected, seeing that education, although made

compulsory and gratuitous by the Federal Constitution, is nevertheless a cantonal matter, and so becomes "national" in quite as distinct a sense as we may speak of Scotch, Irish, or Welsh education being national. Indeed, in some respects there are more marked features of difference between the methods of education in vogue in some of the Swiss cantons than exist between the systems at work in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland respectively ; and, of course, these tend to accentuate still more the differences of cantonal character.

It might be supposed that there would be a general resemblance visible among the people of the French-speaking cantons—*la Suisse romande*. But if there be any such resemblance it is of a very superficial nature. The people of Geneva are as distinct from those of Vaud as it is well possible to be, and this notwithstanding that both are pre-eminently, and even passionately, Protestant. If one might indicate a difference rather than describe it, I should say that the Vaudois resemble somewhat the Lowland Scots, while the people of Geneva remind one more of the Southern English.

Geneva, however, must be taken as an exception. It is, perhaps, the most cosmopolitan city in the world, and certainly one of the pleasantest in which to live, whether considered from the point of view of its magnificent surroundings or from that of the amiable and enlightened charac-

ter of its people. Moreover, the canton is so small that the spirit of the city may be said to dominate the entire people. Very different is it in Vaud, in which agriculture is the dominant factor, and where the people, outside the city of Lausanne—Lausanne the beautiful and the cultured!—are almost wholly of the bucolic type, devoted heart and soul to their arable, their pastures, and their vineyards. The canton is one of the largest, and in out-of-the-way parts women may still be seen wearing the old costume of the country—a costume which my pen has not the gift to describe, but which may be seen painted to the life in the tales of Edouard Rod, who, though ranked among the novelists of France, is a native of Vaud, and I believe of that most characteristic part of the *pays* wherein the famous La Côte is grown.

Very different is the Freiburger to his neighbour of Vaud. Descended, as is supposed, from the Burgundians, the people of this canton still speak in parts a Romance dialect, known to the German-speaking people as Gouverin-Wülsch. The chief centre of this speech is the district round about Gruyères, famous for its cheeses, which go, and are esteemed, all over the world. Between fifty and sixty tons yearly are made in the charming villages that throng the vales and dot the mountainsides of this beautiful and fertile canton. In no other part of Switzerland, perhaps, does the idyllic side of the pastoral life show to

such advantage as in Freiburg. Although the condition of things has changed since Byron's day, and in some respects much for the better, yet his description of this region stands good to this day. "The music of the cow-bells," he writes, "in the pastures which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realised all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence. . . . As we went they played the *Ranz des Vaches* and other airs by way of farewell." Here Byron fell into the error, still common, of supposing the *Ranz des Vaches* to be a single air, whereas the name simply denotes a class of melodies peculiar to the Alpine valleys, and of which, in going from one part of Switzerland to another, many specimens may be heard. They are, as a rule, very wild in character, yet instinct with melody. One can well understand the feeling of homesickness they produce in the breast of the Swiss mountaineer when heard in a distant land, and the almost superstitious reverence paid to a chance-heard sound recalling the well-remembered notes. The *Ranz des Vaches* (or *Kuhreihen*, as the German-speaking people call it) doubtless had its origin in the shrill call the herdsman has to make in order to gather his cattle at milking-time. He early found that by changing his note he could

prolong his call, and, when the wind was high, send his voice further by introducing a falsetto chord. Hence arose the "jodel," by which the shepherds and cowmen can make themselves heard by their flocks and herds, and communicate with one another, at very great distances. The "jodel" is used, too, at times, by the women to call the children in from play and the men from the pastures, and one can well understand how deeply the air of the *Kuhreihen* sinks into the being of a mountain-born Swiss.

I had an instance of this once when on the steamboat going to Gothenburg. One of my fellow-travellers was a Swiss, who had been in business in South Africa in connection with a Swedish firm for a number of years, and in all that time had not been home. He was now going to confer with his firm in regard to some new developments which were in contemplation. One night we were walking the deck together, when my companion put his hand on my arm and asked, "Did you hear that?" I asked what he meant, for I had heard nothing but the wind in the rigging. At first he did not reply, but stood with his hand raised, listening. Then, after a moment or two, he asked again, "Did n't you hear anything?" I said I had not, and he then told me he had distinctly heard the *Ranz des Vaches* of his native hills—on the borders of Freiburg and Berne—and that he had recognised his mother's voice in it, and especially her shrill "jodel."

Whatever it was that had caught his ear or his inner sense, he was deeply moved by it, and in the morning he informed me that he should not go on to Stockholm, his destination, but take the first boat to Hamburg, and proceed thence with all speed home, for he feared something was the matter with his mother.

Freiburg is not only celebrated for its *Ranz des Vaches*, but for its stout men and well-made women, who still, in the remoter valleys little visited by strangers, preserve their old-time costume, and many of their old-time customs besides. The men are noted for their skill in wrestling. They often meet the men of neighbouring Berne, and it is said of them that they frequently triumph over their more stalwart competitors by the lightning-like rapidity of their movements and the dexterity of their attack and recovery. These meetings generally take place on Sundays, the evenings whereof are usually devoted to the dance, to which the inhabitants of these Arcadian valleys are greatly addicted, and of which they have many native forms. Freiburg is a stronghold of the Catholic faith, and is in some respects one of the more backward cantons ; but it is, on the whole, as thriving as most, and its peasantry certainly appear to be as happy as any within the bounds of the Confederation.

Different, again, are the people of Canton Berne from those of Freiburg. The Bernese may be taken as presenting the most characteristic Swiss

type—the men squarely built, large of frame, broad-chested, and rather slow and heavy of motion, but with great grip and immense reserves of strength. The best specimens are to be met with in the Emmenthal and the neighbouring Entlebuch and in the Simmenthal, which are among the most thriving districts in the canton, Simmenthal in especial being noted for its magnificent cattle. Its autumnal markets are thronged with buyers from all parts of Europe eager to improve their stocks by the purchase of specimens from these herds. The Emmenthal and the vale of Entlebuch (the latter in Lucerne) are equally famous for their cheeses, which, as “Schweizer,” are exported in large quantities to northern Europe.

Parts of the canton of Berne, and especially those parts comprised in the Bernese Oberland, together with the Forest Cantons generally, are noted for the survival amongst them of many old-world customs and traits. One of these, observed chiefly, I believe, in Entlebuch and Obwald, is known as the *Kiltgang*, and has reference to an old custom of nocturnal wooing, which is now generally modified in some of its more objectionable features. In many of the villages of the Emme and the Entle the younger portion of the male inhabitants form a kind of vigilance committee to prevent the well-to-do girls from being carried off by outsiders. The lovers in the villages who are of this set are permitted to pay

their visits and climb to the windows of the fair ones undisturbed, while strenuous opposition is given to strangers who attempt to intrude.

Another custom strongly grafted among the peasantry of these parts, and extending hence as far east as Thurgau, is that which every spring turns the youth of the villages to homely dramatic representations. In many villages may be seen a frail though showy erection bearing the inscription "Theatre" on the pediment; but more frequently the amateur performances of the mountain youth take place on a stage with nothing roofing it below the sky. "Da sieht man oft," sings Gottfried Keller—

"Da sieht man oft auf kaum ergrünter Wiese
Ein leicht Gerüst, drauf unter Frühlingswolken
In bunter Tracht, voll Eifer, es tragieren,
Von seiner eignen Menge ernst umringt."

Gottfried Keller is the greatest of Switzerland's modern poets, and in his writings, both in prose and verse, is enshrined many a glittering gem from the folk-lore and folk-life of the Swiss vales and Swiss alps. One of the most striking, as well as the most weird, of the legends associated with the mountains of this central region is that which accounts for the name of Mount Pilatus by connecting it with the tragical end of Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judæa at the time of Christ. It is a little far-fetched, but none the less dramatic on that account. According to the tradition, the Emperor was so wroth with Pilate

for his doings in Judæa that, on his return to Rome, he was thrown into prison. Overwhelmed with his disgrace, the erewhile Governor committed suicide. His body was thereupon cast into the Tiber. But the Tiber would have none of it ; storms arose, and continued until the ill-blest corpse was removed from its waters. It was next taken to Gaul and cast into the Rhone at Vienne, near Lyons. But the same thing happened there as in the Tiber ; storms and tempests arose, and in the end the accursed corpse was carried away and thrown into the Lake of Geneva. Still, however, there was no rest for poor Pilate, whose evil spirit continued to haunt or inhabit his maledict body and to bring blight and destruction upon the lake and its neighbourhood. Finally, it was fished up once more, and this time it was conveyed into the very central region of the Alps, where, in close proximity to Mount Pilatus, then called " Fractus Mons," it was cast into a dark mountain lake.

At length, it was thought, the unblessed spirit, sunk fathoms deep in a lone " ghastr " water, would be at rest. But no ; even here he who " washed his hands " of Christ's condemnation must still be the spirit of trouble and unrest. Storms of wind and rain hung upon the mountain, and ever and anon descended in terror and might upon the vales, drowning flocks and herds, uprooting trees, and washing away houses and crops alike in one mad whirl of destruction.

This went on year after year, until at length deliverance came in the shape of a poor scholar. Hearing of the terrible things the people suffered, and learning also the cause, he resolved to do battle with the unquiet ghost. Learned in the magic as well as the theology of his time, and taking with him such things as he needed, the young scholar ascended the mountain, and in due course found himself confronted by the one-time Governor of Judæa. It is needless to go into particulars. Suffice it to say that Pilate could not withstand the travelling scholar's science or magic, and was obliged to submit to a pact whereby, on condition of one day's freedom, he should remain at peace all the rest of the year. The spell was effectual. Henceforth the land was at rest; but every year, on the return of Good Friday, whoever went to Pilate's Lake beheld, seated upon a throne-like rock above the dark water, the grim, ghostly figure of him who "saw no ill," but permitted it. Terrible he was of aspect, with his red toga of office about him, and whoever looked upon his face died within the year. No wonder the mountain had a dread reputation, and that none went near it who could help. It was not until another scholar, Conrad Gesner, ascended the mountain (1555), and by his natural explanation of the phenomena surrounding it did something to break the neck of the superstitious legend.

It is commonly said that Pilatus "gives the

weather" to the surrounding country, and an element of truth attaches to the saying. There is usually a cap of cloud about its summit, and if that cloud should be blown out in long shreds—that is, in the cloud-forms called "stratus"—it is held to be a sure sign of rain, or, as the natives put it—

" Hat Pilatus sinen Hut,
Dann wird das Wetter gut ;
Trägter aber einen Degen,
So giebt's wohl sicher Regen."

Freely Englished, the verse would read—

" If Pilatus has his cap on,
We may on fine weather reckon ;
But if he doth wear his sword,
Soaking weather is the word."

To turn to still another canton, there are some respects in which the inhabitants of Valais may be described as the most idiosyncratic of all the peoples in Switzerland. It is one of the cantons wherein both French and German are spoken, the latter being the prevailing tongue in Upper Valais, that wild country supposed to have been originally colonised from the Haslithal, and said still to speak an old-time German not unlike that of the period of Pope Hildebrand and the Nibelungen Lied. Whether this be true or not I cannot say; but I can vouch for it that the canton still produces types of character that seem to suggest the time of the Deluge, or before.

The people of Valais are chiefly devoted to the care of their flocks and herds, although of late years, in the neighbourhood of Obergestelen, a beginning has been made with the cultivation of rye. Throughout almost the whole of the valley the people make their bread from a self-planted grain. It is of a dark-brown colour, and often so hard that it has to be taken in hand with a hammer before being placed on the table. Can one wonder that the men of Valais are said to be as hard as the granite of their mountains, and almost as impervious to new ideas? Still, hard as these good folk are, and narrow as is their existence, it is impossible to mingle with them long without being aware of the deep vein of poetry which runs through and in a sort beautifies their lives. It is a poetry, however, that has its roots in the deep religious heart of the people rather than in the imagination, although that is not without its potency and charm. In the churchyard of Obergestelen may be seen a rude weather-worn cross bearing the inscription: "Eighty-eight in one grave. What a grief!" (*Achtundachtzig in einem Grab, welche Trauer!*). It is a memorial of one of those avalanche catastrophes which so often demand their tale of passengers for the overworld, and gives evidence of that quiet, ever-present sense of the Eternal which is among the deepest characteristics of the people, who, at all times face to face, as it were, with the overwhelming forces of nature in their most threatening

shape, have forgotten, if they ever knew, the joyous laugh and shout of other mountain people. Turning for their chief delight to the feasts of the Church, in place of worldlier joys, they dress themselves on such occasions in the bright, picturesque costumes that still hold their ground in those parts, their hats in particular being adorned with coloured ribbons according to the saint whose day they celebrate.

A strange people, for the most part, these Valaisans, superstitious, conservative, loving their old legends, and still mingling them, so to speak, with their everyday life. One of these legends—Dantesque in its grim materiality—tells how the souls of men and women are imprisoned for a time in the Aletsch glacier, and how, if you walk over it, you cannot help treading upon the ice-bound spirits, and so making them suffer the more for the sins done in the flesh.

Although the people of Valais form one of the central units of the Confederation, and are true and patriotic to the Federal idea, yet they are, to a certain extent, a people apart. What is said of them may with still greater truth be said of the Tessinese. They are Swiss in the political sense to the backbone, and though Italian in language and by descent, would not change their nationality for that of Italy at any price. This feeling of Swiss citizenship, however, is a thing of comparatively recent growth. Nor can one wonder. Until 1798, Tessin was a subject State, with few

of those influences at work which so mould and weld communities together as to make them a compact whole.

Even when, in the year named, they received their independence and became part of the Helvetic Republic, they were slow to become Swiss at heart. Besides being Italian in sentiment and tradition, with all that instinctive love of art which is so essentially Italian, they were divided from the rest of Switzerland by a range of towering mountains and a barrier of language almost as great. Still, in the course of the century just closed, the barriers became gradually less and less bars to communication and progress, and finally two events conspired, if not wholly to assimilate the Tessinese with their Swiss compatriots, at least to imbue them thoroughly with the Swiss idea. Those events were the constitutional revision of 1874 and the opening of the St. Gothard railway. The latter especially has been nothing less than a godsend to Tessin. It has brought it movement, stir, life, and not a little wealth — all things which were greatly needed by these dispersed and emotional people.

Possibly in the end these influences may tend to produce greater unity, and, I may add, tranquillity. Of these at present there is little evidence, and the fact is hurtful in many ways. Although the canton is not a large one, it numbers two hundred and sixty-three communes. This, among other elements of disunion, tends to make

the popular life a troubled one. There is no centre with attractions sufficiently strong to draw the warring and divergent elements together, and so to help to mould them into one type. Hence there is little of that quietude of life which makes for the best interests and the highest development of a community. The ripest intellect of the canton is absorbed in politics, and its chief literary energies are spent in journalism. Tessin, with a population of not more than 142,719, possesses no fewer than six daily newspapers and three weekly ones, to say nothing of other publications, all more or less given to politics.

It is probably—to some extent at least—this lack of cohesion among the Tessinese, combined with the prevailing poverty, that makes the denizen of these southern slopes and smiling valleys of the Alps so much a wanderer. The world over, the Tessinese is found a willing worker, toiling for his bread, but toiling still more for the wherewithal to return, ere the closing days of life, to his beloved home among the vine-clad terraces and the chestnut groves of the sunny Ticino. In London, Paris, New York, in almost every capital, he is to be met with as café or restaurant keeper, as waiter, as worker in various arts and crafts; I have met him, and his sister too, as models, in London and other studios. Ever diligent, almost invariably polite and agreeable, he very often manages to lay by enough to enable him to spend the afternoon of

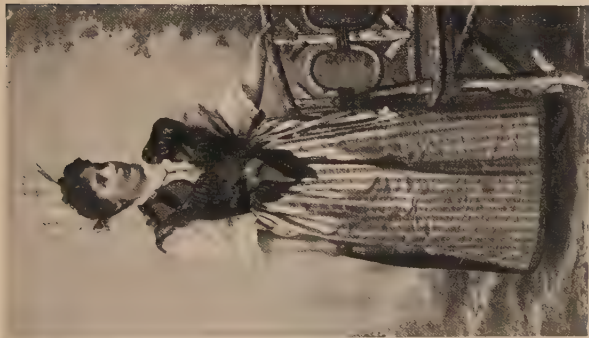
his days literally under his own "vine and fig tree."

It is a small matter that satisfies these men generally—a wee cottage, a little bit of land, with a cow or two or a few goats; and you may see them, these returned wanderers, enjoying the aftermath of life not only in Tessin, but in Graubünden also. But here and there, too, among the little brown Alpine villages, perched like eagles' nests upon lofty, wind-kissed terraces, you will see, looking down proudly from amid their sheltering foliage, the gleaming palatial residences of Tessinese who have made a comfortable fortune abroad, and have returned, they, too, to enjoy it in ease and comfort among their own folk.

I have known several such. Years ago, in a small Fleet Street café, well known of newspaper men, there used to be a little round-faced "padrone" who was never so pleased as when he could put upon his table a luncheon or a supper that pleased his guest. He was great at salads, and for those who liked the tang of it he had a special wine, which he was proud to say was grown by his own brother in their home vale. But the day came when with delighted countenance he told me he had sold his business, and was going to join his brother in that far-away Alpine valley, there to spend the remainder of his days among the mulberry trees and the vines. Years afterwards I chanced upon this man, as



TESSIN WOMAN



COSTUME OF CANTON SCHWYZ

brown as a chestnut, in his own fair land. The fortune he had gone back with was not great, but it was enough.

Not so happy was a couple I used to know in the Old Court suburb, they, too, the striving keepers of a café. Jean saved enough to take over the business, and as he wanted a help-mate, he sent for his *fiancée*, who had waited several years for him. She travelled all the way alone, they were married, and lived as happily together as a pair of turtle-doves. The business, however, proved a failure ; Jean had to take to waiting again. The little wife helped the *ménage* by occasionally sitting as a model ; but though the two talked of returning one day to sunny Tessin, it is to be feared that, if they got back, it was not with much of a competence.

As I have said, similar little homesteads and villas, the eventide homes of natives who have made their little "pile" abroad, may be met with in the Graubünden vales, especially in the valleys of the Vorder and Hinter Rhein and in the Engadine. The Engadine is, indeed, noted in this respect. Owing to its great altitude, its climate is severe and its produce restricted ; and yet for so elevated a region it is thickly populated. Sturdy and well-to-do, also, are its people, albeit not so much from what they make at home, as from the wealth accumulated by their sons abroad, the young men, as a rule, leaving their native valleys early, and finding places all over

Europe, much in the same way as the Tessinese. They go into the smaller branches of trade, and as cooks, confectioners, chocolate vendors, and the like, acquire small independences, which, when the joyful day of return comes, are drawn upon for the erection of those striking abodes which may be seen all over the Engadine—abodes which are of more ample dimensions than they otherwise would be because the cattle have to be thought of as well as the human members of the family. This to the outland eye makes them, together with their decorations of whitewash, gilding, etc., somewhat pretentious looking. They become less “imposing,” however, when we know that they frequently comprise under the same roof cowshed, barn, and perhaps stable to boot; for those who stay at home are chiefly engaged with their cattle, and, as the summer is short, the stock have to be kept indoors during the seven or eight months of winter. The hay is cut about the middle of July, the cattle feed on the grass until winter sets in, when it is again, for the season of the snows, “the closed door” and weather-tight shelter for all.

Most of the people of the Engadine—all, I believe, except those of the village of Tarasp—are Protestant, a religion for which they fought and suffered much in earlier days. In the Lower Engadine this was especially the case, and connected therewith is the interesting survival of the ancient costume of the country to be met with in

this valley alone of the whole of Graubünden. The circumstance is associated with the struggle against Austria for the maintenance of their religion ; the women having taken a vow that, if Heaven would give their fathers and husbands the victory in 1499, they would ever after continue to wear their dark and somewhat severe style of dress. It speaks much for the solidity of character possessed by these people that they have remembered their parents' vow and kept it so long.

The inhabitants of the Engadine speak Ladin (*i. e.*, Latin), one of the two leading dialects of Romansch, and are held in very high repute for their general honesty and good moral character. This, no doubt, has much to do with the prevailing prosperity. In other parts of the Grisons, but more particularly in the district of the Vorder Rhein, there is a strange mix-up of religion, as also of language. Hardly two villages can be found together that speak the same language or profess the same religion. However, generally speaking, where German is spoken the people are Protestant, whilst if they patter Romansch they are most likely to be Roman Catholic. In the district of the Hinter Rhein, German is the language of the people, and they are Protestant.

The whole of this district of the Vorder and Hinter Rhein is rich in folk-lore and legend. Among the valleys of the Silvretta range in particular the people are noted for their wealth of

old-world talk of this description. Many of their most characteristic stories relate to a fairy people known as the Fenken, the tales of whose strange lives and wonderful doings enliven many a winter night and summer eve. Foremost among the beings who figure in these veracious narratives is the beautiful maiden Madrisa, who has given her name to the peak known as the Madrisahorn, as well as to other spots around which centre legends of her doings.

One of these stories is to the effect that Madrisa fell in love with a beautiful mountain stream. She was never so happy as when seated by its side, listening to the music it sang to her, and gazing on the entrancing form which smiled on her when she looked into its depths. This was the beautiful spirit of the stream, which was never far away except in the dark weather. But anon winter came and imprisoned with its icy shackles the tender, music-loving spirit. Then Madrisa could not see her beloved ; she could only hear him moan in his deep distress. But they agreed that, if he ever got free from his toils, they would hasten away together to happier lands—lands which the gentle winds sometimes told them of. At length the spring came, and Madrisa beheld her beautiful lover again. Then they decided to go at once to the happy lands whereof the winds spoke, and there marry and be happy ever afterwards. But, sooth to say, they had not gone more than a couple of days' journey, ere

Madrisa's lover got so mixed up with other streams, and his waters became so clouded, that she could no longer see his face in them. His voice, too, was no longer what it had been, but sad and mournful, and full, as it were, of the talk of terrors and mysteries to come. Then said Madrisa, in her keen dread, "O beloved, let us go back to our mountain home, to its little ways and delightful tunes, and if we can't be as happy as we would be, we will be as happy as we can. Come, love!" So they went back. And still Madrisa sees her beloved in the summer season, and hears his voice, and though she grieves when winter comes with its dark days and iron grip, it consoles her to think, "Perhaps I am happier and nearer to him than I dream. Perhaps it is the longing that makes the loving." Wise little Madrisa!





CHAPTER XI

SWISS WOMEN AND SWISS HOMES

SWISS women, as a rule, are of medium height, stoutly built, and plain in appearance rather than handsome. To comparatively few, indeed, can the latter epithet be applied, although when young some of the girls are certainly pretty, a few beautiful. These last are generally the daughters of well-to-do burghers, who have brought their daughters up in fair ease and comfort. Not unfrequently they are the offspring of foreign mothers, French, German, or English. The reason for this general plainness of type is doubtless the terrible hardness of the life lived by the Swiss women in the past. Matters have improved greatly in this respect in modern times, but their life is still, for all but the fairly affluent, one of continuous toil, descending often to day-long drudgery. This is especially the case in those parts of the country devoted to husbandry and rural pursuits, where no factory law can come in, and where, in addition to the labour which naturally falls to the woman, the climatic conditions of life are extremely severe.

Swiss Women and Swiss Homes 153

One need not wonder, therefore, that so few really handsome native women are seen in Switzerland. The peculiarity is so marked and so common that if a beautiful woman makes her appearance she is almost invariably taken to be either English or American—*Americaine* is the more general guess. I never met with an exception to this rule of attributing feminine beauty to a stranger in preference to a native when there was any possibility of doubt.

The Swiss themselves do not hesitate to acknowledge that their women are not as a rule *ravissante* in respect to physical attractions; but they are aware that good looks are not everything, that charm may dwell along with a very plain exterior, and that all the qualities that are best and most lovable in a woman are much more than "skin-deep." And it is just in these attributes that the Swiss woman shines most. Few make more devoted wives and mothers, few better keepers of the home and hearth. Whether we take the Switzerland of east or west, the old German cantons or the *Wülsch* (as the French-speaking parts are often designated), we find them much the same. The one ideal of duty prevails. The Swiss woman's place is in her home, and there she lives and works. Often enough her devotion is too absorbing, and she suffers in health in consequence. That is why so many are pale and sickly looking. Not only have they the care of the children and

of the house, but frequently they must aid besides in the bread-winning by carrying on some special handicraft, such as lace-making, embroidery, weaving, and the like.

To this circumstance may doubtless be attributed the fact — if we may believe *Elisée Reclus* — that the infirm of body and mind, with the exception of the blind, are more numerous in Switzerland than in the neighbouring countries, and that more than half the young men examined for military service are declared to be unfit. Even the universal prevalence of the school-master has not changed this condition of things, for still in Switzerland, as with us, the school often fails to concern itself with those things that have most to do with daily life and duties. However, things are improving; shorter hours are being enforced in factories, no woman is allowed to do night work, and girls, by being kept compulsorily at school until they are fairly well into their teens, are given a better chance for growth and building up constitution than their mothers enjoyed. Hygiene, too is being better attended to and taught.

Still, on the whole, the life of the Swiss women, whether in the town or in the remote mountain villages, is not an unhappy one. They have their share in all the rejoicings that occur from time to time; they have their church-goings and their home and family gatherings; and if they do not often, when married, go gadding to fair or

market, and less still to the dance, as was their wont before marriage, they have the recollection of the days when they did, and therewith are, perforce, content.

There is a homely proverb current in some parts of Switzerland to the effect that the glad times come in the May mornings. It signifies, as they say in Yorkshire, that "the May-day of life is the hey-day of life," and certainly the Swiss girls know how to make the most of their May days. With them—in the more rural cantons especially—life is very much one long round of pleasure. Not that they are always at dances or on parties of pleasure. But the Swiss girl is, as a rule, full of life, full of hope, and so light of heart that the remembrance of one merry-making easily carries her over a passable interval to the next.

Song and the dance—these are the joy-mates of the Swiss. Nothing rejoices them like music, the music of the voice in especial; and when the heart is young and the limbs still supple, it is very apt to put the rhythm of its desire into both, and bid them beat to its law. Dancing is very popular throughout Switzerland, alike in town and village, in the Protestant cantons as in the Catholic. Among the stricter Protestant folk, however, there has always been, and is still, a moral objection to dancing, and especially to public balls. Family life is stricter, and the social relations of the sexes are perhaps on a

higher level. It is common, for instance, in some parts for young men and women to meet at taverns to dance and hear music; but the practice is looked upon with little tolerance by Protestants, and, I must add, by many Catholics—so much so that in some cantons the law carefully restricts the number of dances that may be held, and these are confined, for the most part, to public holidays.

Even in backward Appenzell-inner-Rhoden a severe restriction is put upon the number of balls which may be given in the village tavern, and girls under twenty may not attend them. These peasant-dances are very characteristic, and anyone who wishes to see something very primitive cannot do better than obtain admission to the village tavern on the occasion of a wedding feast. It is usually a somewhat clownish affair, and at first anything but enlivening. The young men and maidens sit on opposite sides of the room, the young men in what they have of best as regards clothing, and not unusually with pipe in mouth, the young women in the dainty and picturesque costume of the district. The music is almost invariably supplied by a violin or two, with the accompaniment of a *Hackbrett*—*i. e.*, an instrument resembling a zither, played with two light sticks. When the instruments strike up, the young men advance across the room and lead out partners, but it is often some time before the dancing becomes general. Moreover, there is an

unwritten law that everything should be conducted in a very quiet and orderly manner until after a certain hour,—it may be eight or nine,—but after that the fun becomes livelier, and not a little noisier. The staid tripping and turning of the girls, the jumping and heel-thumping of the men,—for it is often little else,—are then varied by hand-clapping and “jodelling,” and by other manifestations of high spirits and enjoyment. All this must cease, however, at eleven o’clock.

Appenzell-inner-Rhoden, as has been already said, is accounted one of the more uncultured centres of Switzerland, and it may be that the young women on that account enjoy greater freedom in their intercourse with the opposite sex than their sisters in other cantons. It is generally at these gatherings at the taverns that they make those acquaintances with young men which result in marriage. There is little opportunity of doing so at home, the life there being very narrow and secluded. Company is seldom received, and visits of any kind, except from members of the family, are an extreme rarity. I have heard it said that by some of the peasantry—and in other parts besides Appenzell—it is looked upon as an insult to call upon a man at his home. Men make appointments with each other at the inn, and then over their stoup of wine or other liquor and a pipe they have their talk on whatever may be the object of the meeting.

It is this inaccessibility of the home among the

poorer folk generally that has doubtless led to so much tavern-haunting by the young men throughout Switzerland, and with such terrible results that some fifteen years ago it was found necessary to take measures with a view to restrict the manufacture of alcohol. There was a time when the wine of the country was almost the sole drink of the Swiss. But gradually the taste for beer, introduced by German refugees, spread among the people, and drunkenness is now, unfortunately, one of the worst sins of the country. As in England, the temperance crusade began as early as 1830 ; but it was not until the matter was taken in hand by the Federal authorities that much progress was made towards checking the evil. It would not appear as though a great deal had been done even yet when it is considered that the consumption of alcoholic beverages stands at 110 francs (£4 8s.) per head of the population per annum. But, say those who are supposed to know best, there is a slow but sure improvement taking place all over the country, which is a good thing to hear.

It may be noted here that, while the Swiss took their habit of beer-drinking from the German, they failed to introduce with it his love of a beer-garden. The uninitiate may think that there cannot be much difference between drinking beer in a garden and in a pot-house ; but there is in truth all the difference in the world. Seated in the open air a man is not stimulated to

drink as much as he is when shut up between four walls in an atmosphere almost stifling with tobacco-smoke. Nothing creates thirst like tobacco, and when a person is breathing it in such volumes as he must do when confined to a room where perhaps twenty are smoking, the provocation to thirst is almost, if not more than, doubled.

There is nothing like the same unwholesome stimulus to thirst when a man enjoys his *Schoppe* and his pipe in the open air. Moreover, there is another circumstance connected with the beer-garden, as the German knows it, which works in favour of sobriety. It is a public place, to which men and women alike resort, to which a man will even take his family, and hence anything like inebriety or bad manners is at once checked. In short, evil habits and vicious behaviour cannot thrive under the public eye as they do in hidden corners and secret places. This is no plea for beer-gardens, however — it is simply a statement of fact; to which may be added the opinion which may, perhaps, have been formed on insufficient experience, but which I am not alone in entertaining, that the German-Swiss workman is not, as a rule, so well behaved and polite in public as his German compeer.

Perhaps republican manners go for something in this matter, though I doubt whether that is the source of the difference. I am more inclined to think that it arises in part from the fact that popular education was a later acquisition in the

Confederation, and in part from the so prevalent habit, to which I have referred, of the young men—and the old, too, for the matter of that—making the tavern their place of nightly resort. How much family life suffers in consequence is only too patent. The refining influence of the home circle is too often conspicuous by its absence, and not only do the young men, but the young women also, suffer as the result. One effect of this lack—a small matter, perhaps, albeit significant—is the often-commented-on *sans gêne* endearments of Swiss lovers of the peasant and artisan classes, who frequently appear to select the most public places for their toyings and caressings.

In some cantons there is a far freer and more enjoyable home life than in others; visits are paid and received, and there is much going and coming between families. In the Forest Cantons there are many home-gatherings, such as in America would be called “bees”—gatherings for shelling walnuts, which take place in succession at different houses; evening parties for getting ready the *trousseau* of the girl about to be married, and so on.

Marriage customs vary in different parts of the country, and to describe them all in detail would occupy more space than is at disposal. Essentially, all marriages are the same in one respect, for the law, regarding the marriage contract as a civil one, requires it to be performed by a magistrate. With some this is all the ceremony that is gone through, though it is followed by the

Swiss Women and Swiss Homes 161

usual feasting and merry-making. Such cases, however, are the exception rather than the rule, the majority of couples, whether Protestant or Catholic, electing to add a religious consecration to the civil ceremony. Usually, among Protestants, the one follows immediately after the other, the couple, with their friends, proceeding from the *mairie* direct to the church. The day is filled up with feasting and a dance, and the newly married pair either adjourn to their new home or go for a short wedding-trip.

In the Catholic cantons, on the other hand, the ceremonial is often spread over a longer period. In Appenzell and Schwyz, for instance, a marriage celebration usually extends over three days. Saturday is very commonly selected for the civil ceremony. On Sunday the couple go to confession, receive communion, and hear mass; then, on Monday, is celebrated the religious rite. This is followed, in the case of all but the *élite*,—if one may speak of anyone under that head in these peasant cantons,—by a dance at the tavern, at which, generally, there is much wine-drinking. It is usually the wine of the country, or cider, which is much drunk in East Switzerland, where, in many parts, it still remains the household beverage. It is, as a rule, very wholesome, relieves thirst quickly, and creates no false appetite. What does the mischief in the country is not so much these drinks as the *schnapps*, the *petit verre* of the French cantons, to which peasant and

artisan alike are so greatly addicted, and in many parts with such deplorable results. What this "sipping" means in the aggregate may be gathered from the fact that the consumption of spirits per head per annum is six litres (nearly a gallon and a half).

There are several features in the Federal law regarding marriage which are worthy of note. One is that no impediment can be put in the way of marriage on the ground of religion, the poverty of one or other of the parties interested, the alleged misconduct of either, or for any other cause. This law was rendered necessary because, prior to the revisions of 1848 and 1874, the Church on the one hand, and the communal authorities on the other, frequently stepped in to prevent and interfere with the right of marriage. The Catholic Church declared "mixed" marriages—that is, the marriage of a Protestant with a Catholic—as null and void, and the offspring of such unions as illegitimate; while communes refused to allow very poor persons to marry, because they were afraid their children might become a charge on the parish. By her marriage a woman now acquires the rights of citizenship enjoyed by her husband. The Federal law permits divorce for—besides the usual reason—cruelty and inhuman conduct, conviction of crime, desertion for two years, and for incurable insanity. There are fewer divorces in the Catholic than in the Protestant cantons. That does not say, of course,

Swiss Women and Swiss Homes 163

that there are fewer causes for unhappy marriage in the one case than the other, but simply that the Catholic Church refuses to allow its faithful sons and daughters to seek legal relief from wedded misery.

All who have visited Switzerland must have been struck with the very beautiful and commodious peasant houses to be met with in many parts. In the poorer districts there are some very miserable wooden shanties, little, if at all, better than those existing in the Highlands of Scotland and in Ireland ; but in the more fertile valleys of Berne, Lucerne, Unterwalden, and the other Forest Cantons there are dwellings which are not only a picture without, but all that is pleasing and convenient within. In the building of these houses no invariable rule is followed ; but in the villages they are generally constructed very solidly of stone to a height of six or eight feet. Upon this foundation the upper structure of wood is raised. In the lower part are commodious cellars for storage purposes ; above them, in front, are the living- and bed-rooms ; behind are the kitchen, dairy, threshing-floor, stables, etc. On either side of the upper floor is an outer gallery, which in some districts runs quite round the house. The roof in front generally projects very considerably, but to a much less extent at the back and sides. The roof is of tiles in more modern houses, in the older ones of pine-shingles weighted with large stones.

The rooms on the first floor of these houses usually comprise the chief living-room, a smaller room, or "parlour," and the best bed-room. The parlour is used only on special occasions. In it, of course, are placed the best furniture and such objects as constitute the household treasures. In Catholic families—and in these mountain districts nearly all are such—a crucifix is never wanting. Equally prominent on the panelled walls will be the pictures of one or two saints, interspersed, perhaps, in the better families with a few family portraits. A clock, likely enough made in the Black Forest, is rarely absent; still more rarely the vase of holy water by the door, for here the family assembles for its devotional exercises, as well as for conference on matters of moment. In some villages much attention is given to the external adornment of the houses and to the cultivation of flowers, not only in the garden-space about the house, but on the ledges of the windows. It is rare to see one of these houses without its pear-tree trained up the front, or, in the warmer districts, its vine. The cultivation of fruit, especially apples and pears, is particularly cared for. When ripe, it is the duty of the women to quarter these fruits and dry them for winter use. Every house is provided with a store, which forms an important item in the family provender.

The people in the more pastoral districts generally live very simply. Even in well-to-do families

Swiss Women and Swiss Homes 165

meat is rarely put on the table, save at times of festivity, or on the occasion of friendly visits, when there will not infrequently be a lavish display. Potatoes form a considerable part of the daily fare ; with buttermilk and bread they often constitute the midday meal. Milk and its products—butter, cheese, curds, etc.—bulk very largely in the daily dietary of the pastoral districts. Bread is often replaced by dried fruit or by curds. Many delicious dishes are made from cream. In Uri, sweet cheese-curds stewed in cream and afterwards baked with fresh butter are regarded as a great delicacy and much esteemed.

I have spoken elsewhere of the custom—more honoured in the breach than in the observance—of the *Kiltgang*, which, strange to say, is sanctioned by parents. Closely connected therewith is the *Maienstecken* of Canton Lucerne. A lover, anxious to do honour to his *innamorata*, plants in front of her window a small pine-tree gaily adorned with ribbons. A young swain can hardly show a greater proof of his devotion than this, and he generally finds his reward in the generous entertainment he receives at the hands of both the girl and her parents. Of a wholly different significance is the straw puppet sometimes hung during the night in front of the window of a girl who is thought to hold her head too high, or whose parents are supposed to be looking for a match for her outside the village.

Reference has been made elsewhere to the circumstance that here and there, in out-of-the-way regions, the old *Tracht*, or costume, of these parts has been retained. But everywhere the old fashions are gradually giving way. Even in the more conservative of the Forest Cantons like Unterwalden and Schwyz, little remains beyond the distinctive head-dress of the women. In the latter canton the girls wear a black cap, the married women a white one. There are in each two slips of upright lace, which, coming from behind over the head, meet on the forehead ; the whole having the appearance of a butterfly with wings half-spread. Between these the girl's tresses are puffed up and held back by a silver pin, called a *Rosenadel*, from its head resembling a partially opened rose. The hair of the married women is treated in a similar way, but is covered with a piece of richly embroidered silk.

The old cantonal costume holds its own as strongly in Catholic Appenzell as perhaps anywhere, and, as it is very picturesque, it is worth a few words of description. The dress consists of skirt, bodice, and head-dress. The skirt is of a rather heavy material, black and dark red in colour, and is folded longitudinally into a number of narrow pleats. The bodice consists of black velvet, and is worked back and front with silver cord. The breast, shoulders, and arms to the elbows are clad in white. A fancy bonnet, with a pair of black, semi-circular wings, con-

stitutes the head-dress. The wings are large, and are attached on each side of the head. They are lined with a soft white material, which is brought to a point over the forehead. The bonnet, worn at the back of the head, is usually adorned with streamers of pink ribbon. The bonnet is often discarded for comfort's sake, both by girls and married women, but the wings never. A good deal of chain-ware and jewellery is worn to complete the costume. It must be said that the fashion suits the plump, blue-eyed, fair-haired daughters of Appenzell.¹

But while this and other similar costumes still linger in parts, in the towns and throughout the country generally the common dress of civilisation prevails, and there is little to distinguish the citizen of Berne, Soleure, or Geneva from the strangers coming from London, Paris, or New York. There is almost less to differentiate the ladies, the Swiss woman being as well read in the fashions as most of her Continental sisters, and equally knowing in the art of showing off her personal advantages.

The thing which strikes a newcomer most in associating with Swiss women of the better class, next, perhaps, to their plainness, is the more general tone of intellectuality which prevails among them. They can, as a rule, talk intelligently not only on politics, but on matters of more general interest—literature, science, education,

¹ *Pure Democracy in Appenzell-inner-Rhoden.*

and so forth. Education is a favourite topic. This is, of course, natural among a people who have played so important a part in what we may call the mission of education—among a people, too, so many of whose daughters, from necessity as well as predilection, devote themselves to the art of teaching. No country in the world produces better governesses than Switzerland, and though it might seem invidious to say that the best come from Geneva, Lausanne, and Zurich, yet it would be hard to find more excellent ones than hail from those cities. Some of the worthiest women I met in Switzerland were of the guild of governesses, and among them were many whom it was a pleasure to know, not only because of their sterling moral qualities, but because of their good sense and wit also. In Geneva I enjoyed a rather unique experience. I spent one winter in a *pension* in which the majority of the guests were governesses, several of them old and superannuated. Many times I counted a dozen seated round the table at once. Some of them had seen service in England, others in France and Russia. One, a very ancient dame, had been for some years in the family of Georges Sand, and had many interesting and amusing reminiscences to tell of that talented woman and her daughter.

Another had been French governess to the children of a Russian Minister of State. They had at the same time an English governess, a woman of great volubility and charm, who was

Swiss Women and Swiss Homes 169

much liked by her employers because of her uniform high spirits and naïve talk. The French governess, however, had doubts about her English, and gave a hint to that effect to her mistress. The latter reported it to her husband, who, suspecting that the French governess was jealous of her English *confrère*, bade her not be stupid. He had had the most excellent recommendations with "Miss," he said, and, besides, what should she, a Swiss, know about English? Mademoiselle apologised, said she had lived a little while in England, and thought, etc., etc., but felt she had been indiscreet. So the gale blew over, and the children went on quietly with their French and their English until the following summer, when an Englishman of some note, who was touring in Russia, spent a few days at the country estate of the Minister. The evening of his arrival, the children, after dinner, were brought in to converse with him, and show how well they had got on with their English. They chatted with rare volubility, and in such a rich North-of-Ireland brogue that at length the visitor broke out into irrepressible laughter. It was impossible to avoid an explanation, and, in short, the host learned, to his inexpressible chagrin, that mademoiselle had been quite right in her doubts as to the purity of her little charges' English.

Another of these women had spent many years in England as a governess, and had in some way come in contact with George and Andrew Combe

of Edinburgh, and was deeply imbued with their views in regard to education and kindred subjects. She had, as I understood, contributed articles thereon to Swiss periodicals; but I never saw any of her writings. I should say that the keeper of the *pension* in question had herself been a governess, and had spent the happiest days of her life in the family of a Derbyshire magnate.

It was highly amusing to hear this lady relate her experiences in England. She had relations in the hotel-keeping line, and in her early days had heard a great deal about the "mad English," who travelled to and fro with, in short, "lashings" of money, and about the same amount of eccentricity. This talk had reference, of course, to the old days of foreign travel, when "my lord" knocked about in his coach-and-four, and dropped his sovereigns as though they were as cheap as cigar-dust. Stories of those times are, or were a few years ago, still recounted by the older hotel-keepers with a mixture of respect and amusement not difficult to realise. The little governess, therefore, came to England with the full expectation of finding everybody as mad as the proverbial March hare. "I was so much surprised," she would say simply, "when I found them so different from what I had expected. *Mais, voyez vous,*" she would add with a laugh, "*je les ai trouvé tous un peu tocqués*" ("I found them all a little touched"). One of the things that struck her as extraordinary was the fact that, a day or

two after her arrival, two of the elder girls she was to instruct went out before breakfast in the misty autumn morning to gather mushrooms, both of them wearing a pair of old boots without stockings, and both, as she put it, without a scrap of hat (*pas un brin de chapeau*). The fact that they simply went into a meadow adjoining the house did not count.

More amusing was her story of the two maiden ladies who, wishing to be kind to the tramps who passed their house, but being afraid to have them come through the garden to the door, had a little seat built at the gate, whereon each morning they placed an equal number of tracts and pence, and over them a card bearing the inscription, "Take one of each." They thought the method worked well because the tracts as well as the pence invariably disappeared.

Having given these governess stories about the English, I must add one told me by the little lady who had been *gouvernante* to the daughter of Georges Sand. The illustrious writer was the heroine of the story, which, according to my informant, she used to tell with great enjoyment. She and her *mari* were taking the waters at some Swiss *Bad*. Shortly after retiring for the night the gentleman was taken with severe headache, and Madame Sand, to give him relief, rushed downstairs to the kitchen to get a towel wrung out of hot water. With this piping hot, the good lady hurried back to the sufferer; but in her haste

and confusion she unfortunately entered the wrong room, and clapped the scalding towel on to the wrong man's head. "Madame," said the narrator, "did not wait for the end of the incident; but she heard the gentleman's imprecations all down the corridor." Which one can well understand.





CHAPTER XII

SWISS CHILDREN

THE subject of Swiss life and work must not be left without a few words about those who in the coming generation will have to carry on the toil and the tradition of their country—the children of to-day. The upgrowing men and women of Switzerland have always appeared to me very delightful. In town and country alike they invariably meet one with a frank, ingenuous look, and not uncommonly with a bright, sunny smile. Though they are quick to mark the stranger, and to note, perhaps, his outlandish garb, yet it is rare to observe in them any rudeness, either of speech or manner. Indeed, I may say that, so far as my own experience goes, I cannot recall a single instance of impoliteness on the part of a Swiss boy or girl. I do not know that, taken as a whole, Swiss children are better than others. They, no doubt, have their faults, as all have; but I must say that I have never found children anywhere better behaved than in this land of mountain and lake. In the villages and on the country roads they rarely meet you without a polite *Guten Tag*

or *Bon jour*, and if you should happen to inquire the way to some place, they will not infrequently take considerable trouble to see that you go right. As a rule, they show the greatest trust, and with a little encouragement they will enter into conversation, and prove themselves very agreeable companions if they chance to be travelling your way.

I remember once in particular falling in with a little fellow who was trudging home from school with a small knapsack of books on his back. It was late in the year, and the days were getting short. But though it would be dark before the little fellow could reach home, he showed no fear. Yet his way lay alongside a grim pine forest, full of strange whispers and uncanny sounds, that would have made many a taller man feel queer in the dark. I was not sorry to have the companionship of one who was sure of the way, and during the mile or two we had to go together I found his boyish talk extremely enjoyable, and to a stranger not a little enlightening. He knew all the live things of the forest, and could tell the names of the flowers that grew by the wayside in the sunny season. One steep slope he pointed out as being specially notable for its *Erdbeeren*, or wild strawberries, and spoke with a certain pride of the number of tiny basketfuls he and his brothers and sisters had gathered the previous summer, and sold either to passing tourists or in the near-lying town.

It is worthy of note that one never sees Swiss

children gathering unripe fruit—destroying it, that is—as is so common amongst the young at home. In England not only town children when in the country, but country children, who ought to know better, will pluck unripe nuts and green fruit wherever it is to be found, totally oblivious of the fact that they are thereby spoiling a possible future pleasure for themselves, to say nothing of others. In this respect, at least, Swiss children are better taught, and though the waysides are often thickly planted with fruit-trees, neither boy nor girl is ever seen to take the fruit in an unripe condition. On the contrary, they are taught to regard the plucking of unripe fruit as something criminal. I shall never forget the cry of horror or disgust which spontaneously burst from a group of boys who were fishing in the Aar when they saw an Englishman draw down the bough of a plum-tree, and pluck a still green fruit. It was as though he had committed some sacrilege. The wild strawberries are never touched until quite ripe. This is part of the education of the young. But when the fruit is ripe for gathering, these little men and women will travel miles, and ascend to considerable heights on the mountain side, to gather these delicacies, which, in the districts frequented by tourists, sell at a good price. They assist in garnering the whortleberry harvest in the same way. But before either the wild strawberry or the whortleberry is ripe these little sons of the *firn* will ascend to

dizzy heights bordering on the regions of eternal snow to gather the whitish-green blooms of the edelweiss, pale emblem of the eternal peace that for ever reigns in those vast solitudes. These they tie up in tiny bundles, and sell to travellers for a few centimes apiece. They will stand by the roadside in the hot sun for hours in the hope of getting a purchaser.

It is wonderful what knowledge many of these children acquire through their intimate contact with nature. It is not, of course, "book knowledge," and so in examinations it would perhaps not tell, but it is of the very kernel and essence of knowledge, nevertheless. This, Swiss pedagogy has of recent years been finding out. For in Switzerland, as with us, a movement was some time ago set afoot to bring the school, so to speak, more in contact with nature. Teachers were required to be well read in science, so as to be able to instruct their young charges in the common objects of the country. But though the science thus imported into the school served well enough for town-bred children, it was found in the rural districts that these dispensers of popular science were really novices in the subjects they pretended to teach in comparison with many of their scholars, who knew at first hand, and often with rare fulness, the things their instructors knew only from books, and to a certain extent perfunctorily. Thus, in numberless instances, the teacher found himself going to school to his scholar. This fact

has been noted and commented upon by educationists, and from such a direct people as the Swiss we may expect some practical results to ensue.

The same thing has been noted by English teachers. In one instance in particular that came under my own notice the teacher of a mixed village school used to take her older scholars on long walks through the fields and over the commons to give them lessons on the flowers, grasses, and other natural objects they met with on their rambles. But she soon found how inconsiderable was the knowledge she could impart to them in this respect, while from them, with their intimate knowledge of nearly every living thing, she was filling up the lacunæ of her book-knowledge all the time. A Swiss teacher whom I recently met reported a similar experience. "I had read deeply in science," he said, "but I only came to know what a true knowledge of natural things meant after I was appointed to a rural school. The boys could tell me no end of things I did not know even in regard to matters which I had made the subject of special study. My science was too much a conglomeration of words, theirs was knowledge of the thing itself." One day, perhaps, we shall learn to place our schools less under the obsession of books.

But to return to my little man of the mountain, who knew the natural things of the forest so well. He had heard, too, of the supernatural beings

supposed to haunt its fastnesses—beings, some bright and beneficent, others fearsome and evil. Of these things he spoke with awe, and when I asked him if he was never afraid of them in passing the wood at night, he said he sometimes felt a little timorous, but he added that his mother had taught him, whenever he felt anything of the kind, to repeat the words:

“Du lieber Gott, ich bin dein Kind,
Mach mich zu allem Uebel blind,”

which, Englished, would read:

“Dear God above, I am Thy child,
Make me to every evil blind—”

a very pretty and wholesome way, it must be confessed, in which to banish fear.

It is astonishing, too, to note what distances children sometimes have to go to school, and how sturdily they trudge to and fro, even in the cold weather, and though the hours of school-going are much earlier than with us. Seven o'clock in summer and eight in winter is the usual time for being in class. This is rather early, according to our ideas; but then the business of the day begins, as a rule, much earlier in Switzerland than with us. Some of the educational associations, however, are at present endeavouring to bring about a modification as regards children under ten years of age, to whom they think it would be

beneficial if school-time were made an hour later—that is, eight in summer and nine in winter.

The change would, no doubt, be advantageous, especially to children of the more rural districts, with whom winter is often the chief season for schooling, so many calls being made upon them for labour during the open weather, and the school authorities making every possible allowance on that account. Possibly in some cases too much latitude is thus granted, with the result that little ones are at times made drudges of to their hurt. One cannot help sometimes pitying the tiny girls, undersized and apparently underfed, that one sees seated in front of wayside *châlets* making pillow-lace to tempt the passing stranger. In like manner one is sometimes moved to pity by seeing a small boy or girl helping, along with a dog, to draw the Swiss milk-distributor's cart.

Perhaps the labour in these cases is not excessive, and it is not that which gives the children their pinched looks; but one unfortunately gets that impression. One thing is very sure, and it accounts to a large extent for the pale faces and shrunken forms of so many Swiss children, and it is that, though the houses of the peasantry are very charming and picturesque to look upon, they are often enough far from being all that could be desired from a sanitary point of view. The rooms are narrow and confined, and though they are blown through by the fresh winds in summer,

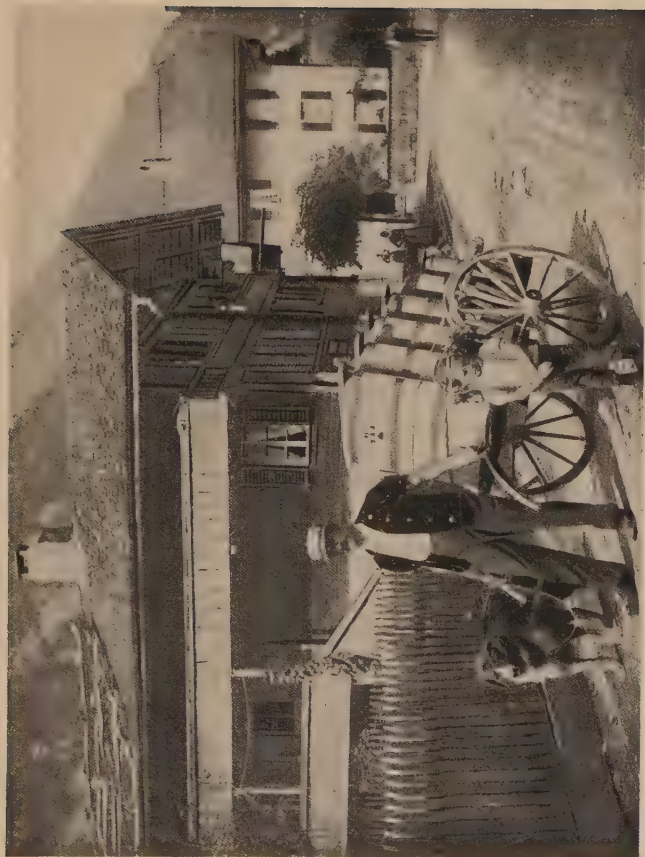
that does not altogether make up for the close and stuffy atmosphere that has to be put up with in winter, nor for the too often unwholesomely packed sleeping quarters at all seasons.

The criticism applies equally to the chalet on the brae-side and to the houses of the poorer folk in the towns—exquisite pictures they make for the camera, but nothing less than deadly are they within. It is this condition, probably, more than anything else, which accounts for the sickly looks and pinched frames of so many Swiss children, even in the healthiest parts of the country—aided, no doubt, by the great amount of labour that is put upon them, and to which they devote themselves so patiently. I well remember a little girl, still almost young enough to be sung to sleep herself, who used every evening to spend a couple of hours, within sight of my window, hushing to sleep a baby half as big as herself. As she walked to and fro she sang the lullaby:

“Schlaf, Kindlein, schlaf! Dein Vater hütet Schaf—”

so well-beloved of Swiss children. It is next to impossible to put the spirit of it into English words, but some idea of the ditty may be obtained from the annexed rendering:

“Sleep, baby, sleep! Thy father tends the sheep,
Thy mother shakes the little tree,
A tiny dream falls down for thee,
Sleep, baby, sleep!



A SWISS MILKMAN



"Sleep, baby, sleep! In heaven walk the sheep,
The stars they are the lambkins small,
The moon it is the shepherd tall,
Sleep, baby, sleep."

And so on, through three or four more stanzas of dainty, childlike nonsense.

As a contrast to this little baby nurse one may present the picture, so often witnessed in the summer season, of troops of children, headed by the schoolmaster or schoolmistress, often by both, wending their way along the mountain paths, vasculum at side, enjoying the fresh air, the fragrant woods, and the flower-lit meadows, joyfully gathering knowledge and health at the same time. Then are the schools set free; for when the temperature has reached a point at which the children become listless, school doors have to be thrown open—*de par la loi*—and the scholars dismissed. To do otherwise is regarded as cruelty.

The higher schools follow the same plan, and it is no uncommon thing, in rambling about the Alps, to meet long strings of girls, evidently of the better classes, tripping along the mountain slopes, headed by their teachers, and perhaps with a guide to lead. They have carefully-done-up bundles at their backs, containing a rug or water-proof, and etceteras; they carry tins with sandwiches and the like; and, with alpenstock in hand, their look is one of businesslike earnest. Nor is it by any means make-believe; for some of these slight misses will walk, with little trouble,

twelve or fifteen miles a day, and arrive at their hotel at night with nothing more the matter with them than a bad hunger. They do not show quite so much gaiety towards evening, perhaps, as when met earlier in the day; but it is very pleasant to see their fresh looks and their cheeks almost as ruddy as the *Alpenrösli*, with which, in true Swiss fashion, they have adorned the heads of their climbing-poles. These girl-parties do not show such a readiness for song as the companies of men who in the summer season take long jaunts together and make the mountains, if not the "welkin," ring with their voices; but one may occasionally hear their shrill trebles waking almost bird-like echoes as they take upon their lips such songs as that known as *Singen und Wandern* :

"Nun ist die schöne Frühlingszeit,
Nun gehtes an ein Wandern.
Bald ist 's allein und bald zu zwei'n,
Bald trifft es sich mit andern.
Wie junges Grün und Sonnenschein,
So muss beim Lenz das Wandern sein."

This is a great favourite; but still more beloved for a shrill out-of-doors shout is *Röslein im Walde*,—

"Irgend und irgend im Wald
Blühet ein Röslein,—

with its telling chorus,—

“Singet mein Herz juchhe
Hallo !
Ju heissa !
Trara !”

Songs, these, which, with the companionship of the sweet air of the woods and mountains and the scent of the meadow blossoms, keep the heart young like the unspoiled hearts of children.





CHAPTER XIII

MILITARY SYSTEM

THERE is nothing in Europe so unique in a military sense as the Swiss army, and it is unique in more ways than one. Take the item of cost, for instance. The British army costs over £100 per man per annum, the Russian army about £23, but the Swiss army only £7 per man. This wonderful difference arises from the fact that the army of the Swiss Confederation is a citizen army. It is organised on what has been called the "voluntary compulsory" system, to which the Swiss of their own free will have resigned themselves in order to maintain the independence of their country. And it is interesting to note that they were the first nation in Europe to introduce universal liability to military service. This arose from the oppression to which the men of the primitive cantons of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden were subjected by Austria and her bailiffs, which made it incumbent on every able-bodied man to familiarise himself with the use of arms.

This law has been so long in force that soldiering has become to the Swiss a second nature. He

takes to the knapsack and rifle as readily as a bird to the wing. By Article 18 of the Federal Constitution every Swiss male is liable to military service from his seventeenth to his fiftieth year. But long before he has reached the age of seventeen the Swiss boy has, as a rule, learned to march, to do the manual exercises, and to go through much of the military drill; for all this is taught him in the school playground. There is, indeed, so much of this military spirit in the Swiss that not many years ago it became a nuisance, inciting the young fellows to enroll themselves in amateur companies, and to go strutting and marching about in uniform, until they became such a public pest that the custom had to be put down by law.

The Federal forces fall into three divisions, named respectively the *Auszug*, or *Élite*; the *Landwehr*, or First Reserve; and the *Landsturm*, or Second Reserve. The *Élite* consists of the flower of young manhood, all being liable to serve in it from the age of twenty to thirty-two. At the age of thirty-two a man passes into the *Landwehr*, to which he belongs until he is forty-four. To the *Landsturm*, or Second Reserve, all are liable from the age of seventeen to fifty who are not incorporated in the *Élite* or *Landwehr*. Indeed, those over fifty years of age are not exempt if capable of service. To this liability to service there are but few exceptions, and they consist mainly of members of the Federal Council, some of the members of the Federal Tribunal, doctors,

and officials connected with hospitals, prisons, the postal and telegraph service, etc. All the brothers in a family are liable to serve, and there is no exemption on the ground that a family is dependent on a man for support. A citizen is only exempt if he be physically incapable, or if he be under size. No one is enrolled under 5 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height, unless, by reason of special qualifications, he is deemed eligible for particular branches of work. The percentage of those who pass muster is slightly over sixty of the entire manhood of the country. In a recent year the levy produced for the regular army, or *Élite*, 117,179 men; and the *Landwehr* for the same year numbered 84,046; making a total of 201,225, which is no inconsiderable proportion of a population of three millions.

The Swiss hold it to be a very advantageous arrangement that all, poor as well as rich, labourer like professional man, must serve in the ranks, side by side. They believe that it tends to prevent any sharp division of classes; they think further that it has the effect of welding all ranks together in closer bonds of sympathy. There is, moreover, no picking and choosing in the service, as, for instance, selecting this or that arm, this or that regiment, because it is more respectable or more fashionable than another. Each man is placed where he will tell to the best advantage. At least that is the rule. Thus a civil engineer becomes a military engineer, a civil veterinary

surgeon is put into the cavalry or artillery, while a butcher or baker would be drafted into the commissariat department. A man has this choice, however, that he may elect to be in a cavalry regiment. So much is almost necessary, because, under certain conditions, the cavalry soldier has to provide and keep his own horse.

Not only is this the case, but, the military system being "territorial," every man serves in the division and regiment belonging to his own district. Thus a man, when doing his soldiering, finds himself shoulder to shoulder with the neighbour who was once his school-fellow, and whom, when at home, he meets daily in the common work of the commune. There are eight territorial divisions, each of which furnishes one complete infantry division. The year's recruits, as soon as they join, are sent to one of the *Écoles des Recrues*, which are held at the following places: Lausanne, Colombier, Berne, Lucerne, Aarau, Liestal, Zurich, and St. Gall. At these schools the recruits undergo six weeks' training. After that they are only required to go up for sixteen days' training every two years. Each year, however, everyone belonging to the army is expected to do a certain amount of practice with the rifle, to keep his hand in, and every commune throughout the country is provided with a rifle-range (*Schütz-graben*) for that purpose.

The double sovereignty existing in Switzerland—that is, the sovereignty of the canton and the

sovereignty of the Confederation—is evidenced in everything relating to the army. All laws which affect its organisation emanate from the Confederation, but the duty of carrying these laws into effect is vested in the cantonal authorities, who see that no man evades the duties of service, and who are responsible for the recruiting and maintenance of a military force proportioned to the area and population of the canton, although no canton is allowed to keep on foot a permanent force of more than three hundred men. The nomination of the officers of the cantonal troops to the rank of *commandant de bataillon*, or major, is vested in the authorities of each canton; but before they are accepted they must have satisfied the Federal military authorities as to their capacity and fitness for the rank to which it is proposed to appoint them. Officers of higher rank than major hold their commissions from the Federal Council.

Switzerland possesses no special military colleges, like those of Woolwich and Sandhurst; but every soldier before he can become an officer has to attend the courses of instruction held at regular intervals in one centre or another. For instance, there is a central military college at Thun for the instruction of officers of the general staff, and another for regimental officers. Here, also, are the principal artillery and cavalry barracks. At Basel is a school for the training of infantry instructors. There are other schools for other departments of



SWISS SOLDIERS PREPARING TO CAMP

work, as, for example, for ambulance work and for shooting (specially for officers). But these schools for instruction are open only at certain periods, not continuously.

The infantry, the field artillery, cavalry, and certain other troops are recruited by the cantons, and are known as cantonal troops. But the engineers, guides, sanitary and administrative troops, and the army train are enrolled by the Confederation. Arms are supplied by the Confederation; but the equipments and uniforms are furnished by the cantons, for which they are afterwards reimbursed by the Federal authorities. The army, on a peace footing, is absolutely complete in every department. The medical, commissariat, and veterinary departments are thoroughly organised. There is a fitting proportion of cavalry, artillery, engineers, and transport. Each battalion is kept up to its full strength, and all in readiness for service. In short, all the adjuncts for making the army mobile in the field are, with the Swiss system of administration, complete and in thorough working order.

The Federal Military Department exercises the executive power over the army; and in order to facilitate the discharge of its duty this department has at its disposal twelve heads of the various branches of the service. The Federal Council selects the officers of the general staff, or *État major*, which, on a peace footing, consists of three colonels, sixteen lieutenant-colonels or majors,

and thirty-five captains. The chief of the general staff is nominated for three years, but the appointment may be renewed. The bureau of the *État major* at Berne is divided into two distinct sections—the general section, which is under the immediate supervision of the chief of the *Corps d'État major*, and the railway section, consisting of nineteen officers of various ranks.

The officers of the cantonal troops are nominated by the Grand Council of the canton, upon the recommendation of the cantonal military director, after having successfully passed through the schools of instruction. Promotion from lieutenant to first lieutenant takes place according to seniority; but the succeeding steps from lieutenant to captain are given in consideration of the officer's general fitness and aptitude without regard to his seniority. The same is true as regards the appointment of officers up to the rank of colonel. In other words, promotion is by merit, and every soldier must first begin his career in the ranks. With the exception of those filling the post of instructors, the general staff, and a few other officials, Swiss officers receive pay only during the short period they are called upon for training. It should be said that no officer rises to a higher rank than colonel, unless he be selected for commander-in-chief, when he becomes a general. Hence there is only one general in the Swiss army. In time of war the commander-in-chief is entitled to receive £2 a day by way of remunera-

tion, while the pay of the private would be about eightpence.

Since the time of William Tell, or the period in which he is reputed to have lived, the Swiss have recognised the immense importance of shooting; and from that day to this it has been the aim of all their successive governments to encourage by every means in their power excellence in marksmanship. The *Tir Federal* (Federal Shooting Association), generously supported by the Confederation, is only one of the many institutions with the same end in view. Almost every commune has its shooting club, and this with the inter-communal and inter-cantonal matches, tends to keep up a high excellence of rifle-shooting.

All those who have spent any time in Switzerland must have been struck with the amount of gun-firing to be heard on Sundays, saints' days, and holidays. Sometimes it becomes a nuisance to the visitor, for from early morning until late at night there is hardly anything to be heard but the continual banging and "pink-pinking" of firearms. The men seem to have no other enjoyment but using their rifles, and the women no other pleasure except watching them do it, unless it be accompanying them to and from the ranges. But such is the way the Swiss prepare themselves for the defence of their country. On *fête* days one may see men in all the different grades of the service, from the newly joined recruit to the major of his battalion, standing side by side in the

Schütz-graben of the commune, thus voluntarily spending their holiday afternoons in perfecting themselves in the use of the rifle. And no one can have watched their practice at the butts without being struck with the general excellence of their marksmanship. These gatherings are utilised for general musketry instruction; for every Swiss soldier is compelled to fire thirty-five rounds annually. If he does not complete his score at the cantonal rifle-meetings he is obliged to attend a three days' course of shooting under military supervision.

As a crowning feature of this admirable system of national defence, with the few exceptions above mentioned, no one is paid for the service he gives to the State as a soldier. He is, however, put to no expense while doing his soldiering. When going up for drill his uniform serves in lieu of a railway-ticket. Nor is the soldier entitled to pension; but if, during his military service, he has been injured and so incapacitated for work, he may claim some support in case of need. If killed, his family stand in the same position, should they require assistance. Apart from those who are exempt from service because of their calling, every Swiss male who does not perform military service is subject to an annual tax in lieu thereof—and this, whether he resides in the Confederation or not. This tax amounts to six francs per man, with the addition of one franc fifty centimes for every thousand francs of fortune he may

possess, or one hundred francs of income, until the age of thirty-two, and one half the same for that age until the age of forty-four.

M. Marsauche says, in his work on Switzerland,¹ that the Swiss in effect possess the strongest and perhaps the best-drilled army among nations of the second rank. This in the main is no doubt true. One cannot see a body of Swiss troops without being struck with their, in general, good physique and many soldierly qualities. If they show a lack in any respect it is one that could be quickly rectified by the drill-sergeant. However, some of the most competent judges in matters military have pronounced the Swiss army to be admirable for its purpose, and "a veritable model of democratic organisation." There is certainly one very praiseworthy thing to be said in its favour: it is the most powerful instrument of the kind we know, obtained at the smallest cost to the community, whether we consider its cost in money or the drain it entails on civic life. No man is constrained to spend some of the best years of his life in garrison, with all that means to a young man, and to the community at large.

¹ *La Confédération helvétique.*





CHAPTER XIV

WORKINGMEN'S SOCIETIES AND CO-OPERATION

IT would, perhaps, be hard to find a country in which workingmen have learned so well the lesson of organisation and have profited so much by it as they have in Switzerland. This has arisen, of course, in a very large measure from the democratic constitution of the country; but an auxiliary cause has lain also in the fact that there are no vast accumulations of wealth in the hands of a few whereby the worker could be starved into submission in case of disputes. These influences, however, do not cover the whole field of causation; many other circumstances have tended to the same result, not the least weighty of them, possibly, being the smallness of the areas and populations involved.

An instance in point was the agitation which took place in the canton of Glarus a little over thirty years ago for the reduction of the hours of labour in factories, which in some cases appear to have extended to fourteen a day. In a statement of their aims and intentions issued by the factory workers it was said: "In working fourteen hours

the workman gains but the bare necessities of life; he could not gain less with a day of eleven hours." The document included a sentence which is very characteristic of the aims and outlook of Swiss workmen. "We wish," it said, "to be the proper guardians and defenders of our own interests, to educate ourselves, to read, judge for ourselves, and to learn to understand ourselves and what is going on around us." This document was issued by five federated societies of workmen, whose cause was espoused and supported by two sections of the Grütli Society belonging to Glarus. The agitation was so well organised and conducted, and was so well backed up at the *Lands-gemeinde* by Dr. Nicolas Tschudi, that it was entirely successful, the working day being reduced to a maximum of twelve hours, and night-work being totally abolished.

The Grütli Society above named is one of the most considerable and at the same time the most generally influential of all Swiss political organisations. It takes its name, of course, from the little meadow on the Lake of the Four Cantons, said to have been the rendezvous of the three legendary founders of Swiss freedom — Werner Stauffacher, Erni of Melchthal, and Walter Fürst. Founded in 1838 at Geneva, the Grütli Society soon spread its ramifications all over the country, and falling shortly under the direction of a man of large ideas and wise guidance, it became a power of no mean order in the land. It may not

since always have been under the inspiration of Galeer's noble spirit, although it appears in the main to have worked with a high and extremely practical purpose in view. Albert Galeer's great idea was the education of the people; but the education he had in mind was that larger one of ideas and development which in our days is so much lost sight of. To such education he looked for the evolution of a nobler society rather than to the interference of the State. He appears to have had great contempt for "little demagogues and little systems." What they wanted, said he, was "a great demagogue and a great system." The Grütli went through a period of persecution—in the canton of Berne more particularly—because it was considered dangerous to the public welfare. But it came out all the stronger for the trial, and has never since ceased to exert a powerful influence in politics. Although composed for the most part of workingmen, there is a strong infusion in it of men of the professional classes, and these, without attempting to "capture it," have tended to broaden its outlook and purview. Thus Professor Carl Vogt presided over the proceedings of the Grütli *fête* of Geneva in 1870, and other equally prominent men have identified themselves with the association in other parts of the Confederation.

Many of the principles now enshrined in articles in the Federal Constitution were first strongly agitated, if not primarily initiated, by the Grütli. Among such may be mentioned the right of as-

sociation, the abolition of military capitations, the Federal law in regard to education, the guarantee of personal rights, etc. The partial revision of the Constitution of 1866 having resulted in no extension of the rights of the people, the Grütliens at once set on foot a movement for the complete revision of the Constitution, which was finally brought to the successful issue of 1874. It is not a little surprising to note how many fruitful ideas sprang out of these associations of workingmen. They were the first to make the suggestion of a central *caisse d'assistance*, of people's banks, of a central labour bureau, of a Federal school of trades and industries, of conservatoires of arts and crafts, exhibitions of the work of artisans, and many other similar ideas.

It was in connection with the Grütli that the first co-operative association, properly so-called, was founded, although the Swiss had, almost from time immemorial, been familiar with, and accustomed to act in accordance with, its spirit. This was a natural outgrowth of the communal spirit. For instance, in Canton Vaud, all the young men of the villages go, towards the end of the winter, to stay a few days in the woods, to fell timber, and to bring it down the steep slopes to where it is needed, the timber and the fuel-wood being either divided among the various householders of the commune, or sold for their benefit. Out of this kind of associated work doubtless sprang the associations of peasants, fairly common, who join

funds to buy meadows and fields, and cultivate them as co-owners. In nearly all the cantons are to be found, too, what are called *Bürger Nutzen* clubs or associations in connection with the communes. All have a certain right or property in the communal lands, and they will either cultivate them in common and divide the produce, or they will hold a sufficient number of cows in common to supply each family with milk, butter, and so forth. This kind of co-operative helpfulness appears to be of very ancient date in Switzerland, and there are still communes wherein, when a man sets about building a house, all the carting of material required is done by his neighbours, and should such assistance be withheld, he regards it as the result of some ungracious conduct on his part.

It was not until 1850, however, that a distributive co-operative society was formed on the lines now so general. This society, which still exists, was, I believe, started on a capital of seventy-five francs. It aimed, in the first instance, at nothing more ambitious than the cheapening of cigars to its members, and this object was so successfully attained that operations were presently extended so as to include shirtings. One Carl Bürkli was the father of this association, and he wrote somewhat later in regard to it: "Individualism and communism are the two extremes or poles of the society—and there it is cold; between the two is the happy zone of the association: it is there

where it is good to live." The saying is an apt one, and characterises very naïvely the spirit of Swiss socialistic thought.

The Grütli has always associated itself more or less intimately with socialistic leanings, and it may almost be said to have adopted the formula of Klein, that political without social liberty is only a half-way house. Perhaps those sections belonging to French Switzerland were the most strongly indoctrinated with socialistic ideas—this perhaps because of the strength of the French and Italian element. The Swiss themselves are, as a rule, so cool and practical in temper that it is only the small minority who are carried to extremes. It is largely owing to this practical and, I must add, moderate, temper that the Swiss workmen have succeeded so completely in protecting their interests. Industry in Switzerland is regulated by the law relating to factories of March 23, 1877, and by the law regarding the civil responsibility of employers of July 25, 1881, amended and completed by the law of 1887. These laws for the protection of workmen are the most humane of any in Europe. They are also, says Marsauche,¹ an argument against those who pretend that the regulation of industry by the State interferes with its successful operation, trade and manufacture being as prosperous in Switzerland as in other countries.

Nothing could be more to the credit of a society

¹ *La Confédération helvétique.*

like the Grütli, and the popular Radical Volksverein, with which it worked during the years which brought about the first great constitutional revision, than the numberless measures of a popular character which were embedded in the Federal Constitution and in the statutes of the various cantons as the result very largely of the devoted advocacy of these and other workingmen's associations. One matter which they had much at heart, and which they succeeded in introducing in many cantons, was the gratuitous supply of school material. Another was assurance against a time of non-employment.

It was not until the seventies that a practical attempt was made to federate the various societies of workingmen. This first federation *Schweizerischer Arbeiterbund* numbered about ten thousand members, of whom four thousand belonged to the Grütli. This and a kindred association, founded a few years later, and called the Swiss Social-Democratic Party, soon went to pieces, however, and gave place to three other associations, one being a federation of workmen, and the two others being companionships of Social Democrats, one of native Swiss and the other of Germans in Switzerland. These three associations, together with the Grütli, always vital and to the fore, and a number of German workmen's societies, elected a common committee and discussed their affairs at a general congress of Swiss workers.

Some idea of the strength of these combined organisations of Swiss workers may be gathered from the numbers represented at the congress held at Aarau in April, 1887. In addition to the Grütli (with thirteen thousand members), there were delegates present from fourteen other societies, numbering in all something like one hundred thousand members. The federation of workers then organised took for its aim "the representation of the economic interests of the working classes in Switzerland." The federation appointed a secretary, whose importance has grown year by year. Indeed, of so much consideration has the office become that the Federal Council has thought fit to attach to it a subsidy of twenty-five thousand francs. The chief secretary is aided by two assistant secretaries for French Switzerland, one of whom is stationed at Bienne and the other at Geneva.

The duty of this secretarial department is to assist workmen with information and counsel, and to collect material of a scientific and statistical nature such as may aid in the work of labour legislation. It has been found to be useful both to the Federal Government and to the federated societies of workmen, whose numbers are now put at something like two hundred thousand. Those of the workers who are of a more independent disposition would prefer to see the "secretariat" free from all dependence upon the Federal authorities. They think such connection might tend, under

certain conditions, to less freedom of action than would be desirable. However, the prevailing opinion appears to be that the Government grant is not in any way intended to influence the opinions of those who benefit by it, and that there is no reason, in this as in other matters, why there should not be a certain amount of give and take between the parties concerned.

In comparing the condition of Swiss workmen twenty years ago and to-day it must be acknowledged that there is evidence of a remarkable advance, and it can hardly be doubted that the change has been brought about very largely by the steady pressure the workmen themselves have exerted upon the Federal and cantonal authorities. In no country is the workman treated with so much consideration as here. He is protected on every side; nor can it be said that this protection amounts to coddling. The normal working day has been fixed at eleven hours; the labour of women and children has been limited; Sunday labour is allowed only in exceptional cases. The factory laws have been extended so as to include other branches of labour, such as printing-offices and watch-making establishments. The responsibility of railway companies for workmen injured in their employ is unlimited, that of manufacturers extends so far as to require them to pay to those hurt an indemnity equal to six times the amount of the sufferers' yearly earnings, or a maximum of six thousand francs (£240).

Many other enactments might be mentioned which have tended to the amelioration of the condition of labour; but it must suffice to refer to two or three only. For instance, by recent laws it has been made illegal to work any man connected with railways, trams, steamboats, or the postal, telegraphic, or telephonic systems longer than twelve hours at a stretch. The same enactments require that all employés of these services must be allowed from eight to ten hours' rest, according to the class of work they are engaged in, and that all, without exception, shall be allowed fifty-two days of rest in the year, seventeen whereof must be Sundays. Several cantonal laws have regulated the work of apprentices, and limited the work-hours of those engaged in shops and public houses. Thus in Zurich the law for the protection of women engaged in the lighter kinds of industry, such as millinery, dress-making, and the like, has fixed the hours of labour to nine hours on Saturdays and ten hours for the other days of the week. M. Theo. Curti, an authority on these subjects, remarks very emphatically on the great improvement in the condition of the working population of Switzerland which has been brought about by these legislative measures. "Thanks to them," he says, "many a workingman now enjoys a position of modest comfort and well-being."

This improved condition of things is undoubtedly due in a very large measure to the

democratic Socialists, of whom it has been well said that they have done more by what in England would be called constitutional methods than has been done by Social Democrats with their methods in other countries.

Side by side with these political, and what I may term fighting organisations, other and equally important agencies in their way have been at work improving and elevating the condition of the working population. I have already referred to the natural genius of the Swiss for co-operation. Indeed, it has been claimed for Switzerland that it was the birthplace of distributive co-operation. All the same, it was not until they had adopted the Rochdale method of profit-sharing, as Dr. Hans Müller acknowledges, that the distributive societies acquired their full development. Co-operative effort takes many forms in Switzerland, such as mutual assurance, associations for credit, the supply of water, and so forth; but perhaps the most popular of all the ways in which it has shown itself is that of the People's Bank—an institution which possesses thirteen branch establishments, numbers nineteen thousand members, and has a capital of over seventeen million francs. More important, however, as regards the trade of the country are the associations for production and sale that have developed so enormously of late years in connection with agriculture. Associations of the kind in West Switzerland date as far back as the beginning of last century. Several in



A WOMAN OF UNTERWALDEN



WOMAN OF CANTON ST. GALL

Canton Vaud are specially noteworthy. They have to do with the production of cheese. Similar associations are now in existence all over Switzerland, and they have proved so important an adjunct to husbandry that it would now be impossible to do without them. In all there are upwards of fourteen hundred of these "cheeseries" (*fromageries* in French), as they are called, some of them having to do with that most characteristic of Swiss cheeses, the *Schabzieger*, made almost exclusively in the small canton of Glarus.

Another form of productive co-operation is that which concerns itself with the rearing and the improvement of the breed of cattle. Associations of this description are exceedingly numerous, and very useful, as they enable small farmers gradually to improve their stock. Other associations of hardly less importance, and equally extensive in their operations, are those having to do with forest preservation, arboriculture, vine-growing, the cultivation of tobacco, etc. Co-operation in regard to the sale of milk has not proved so successful as in other departments of agriculture; nor has co-operative production in other branches of trade and industry achieved any better results in Switzerland than it has in England. I simply state the fact: the cause of this failure lies probably in the nature and character of those brought up to trades, and it would take too much space to attempt to elucidate it here.

But in the same measure that co-operation in

the department of manufacture has failed, in that same measure, and even greater, has it succeeded in the department of distribution. But, as already said, that success was not fully realised until the Rochdale principle was adopted. Then followed, quite naturally in a country like Switzerland, the federation of the various co-operative societies. First came the federation of the agricultural "co-operations" of East Switzerland. This was followed (in 1890) by the union of retail societies, composed chiefly of workingmen in the large towns and industrial centres. Finally, in 1898, these two organisations were amalgamated in one general federation of Swiss co-operative associations. At the end of 1899 the total number of societies of consumption in Switzerland was 344, with a membership of 117,600 and a turnover of forty-six million francs. In these figures are comprised a number of agricultural supply associations, which are essentially societies of consumption. But in addition to these there are in existence some four hundred organisations wholly and solely for the purchase of stock, seeds, and other matters necessary to the farmer. It will be seen from this digest how closely the two classes of workers—that is, the artisan in the towns and the toiler on the land—are associated in this work of social economy; and when it is further explained that the Swiss Federation of Co-operative Associations has for aim and purpose the defence of co-operative organisations and co-op-

erative principles, and for the dissemination of knowledge in connection with the same, it will be understood what a powerful influence it is exerting on Swiss life and thought.





CHAPTER XV

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND INFLUENCES

MUCH has already been said in respect to the religious character and life of the Swiss people, and I do not propose to say a great deal more, except to show, in a general way, how the various churches are organised, and how they affect the life of the different cantons. The sharp divisions existing between cantons and parts of cantons in this respect constitute one of the most striking peculiarities of Swiss life, and indicate, in a very marked way, the effects produced by the little regard which was had in the past for religious tolerance. However, all that sort of thing has now disappeared, or nearly so. The Constitution of 1874 proclaims liberty of conscience. Throughout the Confederation no one can in any way be molested because of his religious belief or non-belief; nor can anyone, according to the Federal law, be compelled to pay a tax or impost for the support of a church or religious organisation to which he does not belong. But while the law of the Confederation thus enacts, it wisely leaves a certain margin of action to those cantons which

still recognise and subsidise an official Church or, as in some cases, more than one.

The Confederation itself subsidises no Church; having recognised that Churches exist and need to be protected in the free exercise of their worship, it leaves the matter to the cantons. But while the Federal law provides for the absolute freedom of religious opinion, it at the same time leaves no room for those who claim Swiss citizenship to shirk civic duties on the ground of religious conviction. The Doukaborsti, therefore, would not find Switzerland, any more than Canada, quite the ideal place to live in, according to their view. While the Confederation is thus tolerant as regards religious opinion and the free exercise of worship, it reserves to itself the right, and reserves also the right of the cantons, to suppress or eject from the country religious organisations which are dangerous to the public peace or to the general welfare. Article 50 of the Constitution says expressly that "the cantons and the Confederation may take such measures as may be found necessary for the maintenance of public order and for the preservation of peace between the members of different religious organisations, as well as against any encroachment on the part of ecclesiastical authorities upon the rights of citizens and the State."

The same article makes it illegal for bishoprics to be established or bishops to be appointed on Swiss territory without the permission of the

Federal authorities. This clause was introduced in consequence of an attempt which was made by the Vatican authorities some thirty years ago to place a vicar-apostolic over Geneva and the neighbouring canton of Vaud, which led to a somewhat sharp conflict between the papal and the Federal powers. By another article the Jesuits are forbidden to establish themselves in Switzerland or to have anything to do with the Church or in the schools. This interdict can be extended to other religious orders, if they are deemed to be in any way dangerous to the public peace. It seems strange, but the Salvation Army was considered of the category "dangerous," and, like the Jesuits, had to be kept curbed. One would think it unnecessary to proceed to such extremes with so apparently innocent an organisation as the Salvation Army. It must be remembered, however, that the "Army's" methods are of an exciting nature, and it would require very little fanaticism to set fire to a community like that of Switzerland, in which the two dominant sects are so nearly balanced as regards numbers that it requires a firm hand and great tact to keep them at peace one with the other. The task is not an easy one, and on more than one occasion of late years the Federal Government has had need of all its wisdom and discretion to hold the more inflammable elements in check.

The *Kulturkampf*, which made such wild work for so many years in Germany, was no less disas-

trous to the public peace of Switzerland. It divided the Catholics into two sections, and though the "Old Catholics," or those who do not accept the Vatican decree of papal infallibility, are a small body compared with the Ultramontanes, still they constitute a power that has to be reckoned with, seeing that they include not a few men of singular prominence and force, like Herzog, Munzinger, Michaelis, and Keller. Happily, the strife of religious parties was ended by a truce in 1878, and since then both divisions of the Catholic Church have worked with more or less harmony side by side. It may be said here that while a certain number of convents and religious orders do exist in Switzerland, it is illegal to add to their number.

In 1889, the Old Catholics of Switzerland joined with those of Holland and Germany to form a union which, while it left full liberty of action to each community, tended greatly to strengthen the body as a whole. Later the union was augmented by the adhesion of the Old Catholics of Austria, Italy, and America, and year by year this independent section of the Catholic Church has gone on steadily with the work of development and organisation. In no country has it a better record of work, according to population, than in Switzerland. Communities and associations of Old Catholics, or Catholic Christians, as they seem preferably to call themselves, exist and are recognised by the State in the cantons of Aargau,

Basel (Stadt and Land), Berne, Geneva, Neuchâtel, Schaffhausen, Soleure, and Zurich. There are others, not officially recognised, in the cantons of Lucerne and St. Gall, while smaller associations, in some cases not fully organised, communities rather in the making, exist in the cantons of Aargau, Basel-land, Berne, Geneva, Lucerne, Soleure, and Zurich. The total number of adherents claimed by this section of the Catholic Church in Switzerland is put at about forty thousand, while the list of its clergy, according to the Synod of 1898, includes fifty-nine names. A very important service was rendered the Old Catholics by the canton of Berne in 1874, when it founded a chair of Catholic theology in the State University, and to enable students to take advantage thereof, bursaries of the total value of one hundred thousand francs have been founded.

If the Old Catholics have been active of late years, the Ultramontanes have shown themselves no less so. After the rebuff it received in regard to the vicar-apostolic of Geneva, the Vatican wisely drew back *pour mieux sauter*, and Monseigneur Gaspard Mermillod was, a little later, duly recognised by the Federal Council as Bishop of Lausanne and Geneva. The event put an end to a state of things that was no less dangerous than exasperating to those concerned. A number of Catholic priests of the canton of Geneva, not being able to take the oath which the new ecclesi-

astical law imposed upon them, saw themselves replaced by others; while at Zurich, at Berne, and in several smaller towns the supporters of papal infallibility were deprived of churches which they had built with money specially subscribed for the purpose—to the profit of the Old Catholics.

Possibly in the end no one was much hurt by what had taken place, the awakening throughout the length and breadth of the land which resulted from the stir having greatly stimulated the general warmth and earnestness of the religious life of the country. One of the evidences of this new spirit was seen in the accomplishment of a hope which had been cherished by the Catholics of Switzerland for several centuries, namely, the creation of a university at Freiburg. A faculty of philosophy and a faculty of jurisprudence were installed; then to the faculty of theology were appointed two Dominican fathers and two secular priests. Finally a chair of science was added, and the academic edifice stood forth complete. The credit of creating this school, which has been pronounced "the most important work of the Swiss Catholics during the nineteenth century," is due in the main to the activity and intelligent appreciation of the chief of the department of public instruction of the canton of Freiburg, M. Georges Python, a man of great qualities, and very highly and deservedly esteemed.

As already stated, the organisation of religion is an affair for the cantons separately, and as in

the matter of religious instruction, and almost everything else, so in this regard also the greatest diversity obtains. Each canton has the choice of the religion, or "confession," as it is usually termed, it will adopt, which then becomes the religion of the canton, and is supported either by a special tax or out of the ecclesiastical properties of the State. Sometimes the revenue is derived from both sources. Where there is a special tax, no one except those belonging to the established Church of the canton is obliged to pay it. In some cases both Protestants and Catholics are equally favoured by the State. This is the case in the canton of Geneva, where there is also a joint-consistory for the supervision of the religious instruction of the young. In Neuchâtel there are, so to speak, three national Churches, for with a fine breadth of tolerance rarely met with, the State pays towards the support not only of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, but for that of the Jews also.

In the Catholic cantons the general ecclesiastical organisation is, of course, under the supervision of the bishops, of whom there are six, namely, those of Basel, Chur, Sion, St. Gall, Lausanne and Geneva, and Freiburg, besides an apostolic administrator of Tessin. All ecclesiastical property, however, is under the charge of popularly elected local bodies, and no priest can be appointed except with the approval of the secular authorities. In the purely Catholic cantons

the Church has immense power, or perhaps one should say influence, for it consists almost wholly in forming opinion, no ecclesiastic being eligible for public office, except in connection with Church administration. Uri, Schwyz, and the Unterwaldens, Tessin, Valais, Schaffhausen, and Appenzell-inner-Rhoden are almost wholly Catholic and Ultramontane; Aargau, Thurgau, St. Gall, the Grisons, and Geneva are about equally divided between the two confessions; while Lucerne, Zug, Soleure, and Freiburg contain small numbers of Protestants.

The only cantons almost wholly Protestant are those of Vaud and Appenzell-ausser-Rhoden. The latest statistics give about fifteen thousand Catholics to Vaud and between six and seven hundred to Ausser-Rhoden. Protestantism, however, predominates very largely in the cantons of Zurich, Berne, Glarus, and Neuchâtel, and some of these being among the most populous districts of Switzerland, they bring the aggregate balance of population in favour of the freer confession. In other words, broadly put, Protestants stand for three fifths of the population, the remaining two fifths being in the main Catholic. It is curious to note that while Catholicism prevails generally in the more mountainous districts, Protestantism takes the lead in the flatter cantons.

The ecclesiastical affairs of the Protestant cantons are conducted by mixed authorities. But the constitution of the same, and especially the

organisation of the Church itself, and the position of the clergy in relation thereto, are extremely varied, because these are matters which come under the province of the cantonal authorities. There is, however, a general resemblance, and a description of how matters are arranged in Vaud will give a good idea of what obtains elsewhere. The affairs of the Church are, in short, governed by a Synod, but that Synod is subject to checks and control both from above and below. The origin of authority is the parish assembly, which elects a parish council, consisting of from four to fourteen councillors, according to the size of the parish, and the local pastor or pastors. This council, besides having a general supervision over the parish as regards its religious and moral well-being, sends delegates to the District Council, which is again concerned with the general government of the Church, although its work for the most part consists in selecting deputies for the Synod, in inspecting parishes, and in supervising pastors and the parish councils. The deputations sent to the Synod from each District Council consist of three pastors and six laymen, all chosen by ballot; but, in addition to these, the Synod must include professors of theology connected with the canton, and three delegates chosen from the State Council. Its meetings are annual, and take place in one of the principal towns, which is always selected the previous year. The duties which devolve upon the Synod are such as concern the

general welfare of the national Church—religious instruction, the books used in worship, discipline, the ordination of pastors, religious festivities, etc.

It will readily be seen what a wide ramification of activities this means, and how much it enters into the public and private life of the people. And when it is considered how many agencies there are besides, auxiliary to these more regular functions of the Church, it will be easily understood that there is little time for stagnation or dulness even in the smaller rural parishes.

When not in session the Synod is represented by an executive committee composed of three pastors and four laymen, by whom all business brought before the body is prepared. Although the Synod has to do with the ordination of pastors, it does not choose them. The method of choice is as follows: the candidate for the pastoral charge of a parish in which a vacancy occurs must send his name to the cantonal department of public instruction; and he can only do that when he has completed his twenty-fourth year, and either possesses a degree of the University of Lausanne or has passed the examination of the *Commission de Consécration*. This body consists of four delegates from the State Council, eight from the Synod (four of them being pastors), and three professors of theology chosen by that faculty. A list of the applicants for a vacancy is sent to the parish council, whereupon that body calls a meeting of the assembly, which proceeds to select

by ballot the names of two candidates. These are then submitted to the State Council, which finally names the one it thinks most suitable for the post. It seems a roundabout way to get at a very simple result but on the whole it works well, and gives everybody, as it were, a finger in the pie—and therein, in truth, consists a large part of wise government.

The religious life in the Protestant, or strongly Protestant, cantons is very active, and in none, perhaps, more so than in Geneva, where things are seldom left on the simmer, least of all matters theological. The city of Calvin, small though it be, is in the world's main current, and few are the tides of thought that do not wake a responsive heave of the waters there. Vaud is said always to have shown a strong sympathy with religious movements in Scotland. In Geneva the sympathetic link is rather with the newest wave of thought, whencesoever it may come. It was in that city, I believe, that the *Église libre*—the Free Church—took its rise, spreading thence to Vaud and Neuchâtel. At any rate, it early took a firm hold there, and at the present time it is probably the most vital religious influence at work throughout the Confederation.

It is interesting to note, however, that in this "city of the spirit, built of stoicism on the rock of predestination," Calvinism is as dead as Calvin himself. And, says Dr. Montet, professor of theology at Geneva, "*si dans la Suisse française, le*

Calvinisme a complètement disparu, dans la Suisse allemande l'orthodoxie trinitaire d'origine allemande n'a qu'un très petit nombre de représentants."

In the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, however, the evangelical churches are far from possessing the same complete organisation enjoyed by the *Église libre* of *la Suisse romande*. They resemble somewhat in general features the Congregational bodies in England, and are marked by the same diversity in doctrine. Of Lutheran origin, for the most part, the Protestant community is now broken up into numberless sects, in which Lutheranism is an altogether vanishing quantity. It is said that, among other bodies, the Irvingites have their little knots of believers in East Switzerland as well as in West. Be that as it may, the American Methodists certainly have a strong following, and one of the pleasantest recollections I have of a recent visit to Switzerland is of a little group of young men and maidens who had come across the Atlantic on a twofold errand of evangelisation and pleasure, their destination being Zurich, where a great Methodist conference was to be held. One could not help thinking that if our friends the Americans continue to send over such bright and enthusiastic missionaries they will stand a great chance of converting the whole country—the youthful part of it, at all events.

Still, notwithstanding the earnestness and

activity of the almost numberless sects of Christians everywhere, one cannot help recalling to mind the parable of a little sexton of Interlaken. Asked why the bells of the church commenced to ring so early on the Sunday morning, he said it was because three sects used the edifice one after the other. "It is, perhaps," said he, "a sign of Christian feeling that they can agree to worship in the same building; but it would be more Christian still if they could sink their differences and assemble all together, seeing that it is the same Christ we worship."





CHAPTER XVI

POPULAR FÊTES AND FESTIVALS

THE Swiss throw the same zeal into their popular *fêtes* and rejoicings which they throw into almost everything else they take in hand. It is rare that they can be charged with entering into any enterprise, be it of work or play, in a half-hearted manner. Thus far the virus of ennui and its sequent cynicism, which are so apt to attack and to enervate great and successful nations, have not touched the Swiss people. They are yet, as it were, in their buoyant youth, with the man's task still before them; and whenever there is an undertaking which appeals to the national heart, they apply themselves to it with all the abundant energy of youthful days. In nothing is this spirit so strikingly shown as in connection with some of the popular *fêtes* and gatherings that break the monotony of the revolving year.

These celebrations, if added together, form a host. They are, however, of two kinds—first, national, in the sense of uniting the suffrages of the whole people, and, second, cantonal. Cantonal *fêtes* are generally of a semi-religious

character, as celebrating some supreme event in the history of the canton—a battle, the winning of independence, an evidence of Divine mercy, or what not. Of such is the annual feast that takes place in the canton of Geneva on the first of June, in commemoration of its union with the Swiss Confederation. It is held religiously as a general holiday, and the day is always opened with service in the churches.

Another celebration of the kind is that of Näfels in the little canton of Glarus, which is held on the first Thursday in April, that being the anniversary of the battle fought there against the Austrians in 1388. On the 9th of April in that year some six hundred men of Glarus encountered a force of between five and six thousand Austrians, and, utterly defeating them, preserved the independence of the canton. In remembrance whereof the Glarner, peasant and workman alike, makes his way on the day in question to Näfels, and listens, under the open sky, to a sermon tuned to the occasion, and after returning thanks to God for His great mercy then and since, grasps his *Fahrtstecken* with a tighter grip, and goes homeward again. Many other celebrations of a similar nature are to be met with in various parts of Switzerland, simple, heartfelt affairs for the most part, extremely local in character, and highly characteristic.

Very different are the more general, and more truly national, *fêtes* and assemblages that mark

Popular Fêtes and Festivals 223

the festive season. Of these the most noteworthy is the annual shooting-match, the *Tir Fédéral*, as it is called in French. This is held at a different place every year, most towns of any importance in the Confederation having been the scene of the *Fest* at one time or another, some of them more than once. This movable nature of the gathering tends to give spirit to its annual recurrence, each town vying with its predecessor in the heartiness of its welcome to competitors and visitors and in the splendour of its preparations.

These shooting-matches are of very ancient date, and can be traced back to the fourteenth century, when Zaehringen had a society for the encouragement of shooting, and Soleure had a *Tir aux fleurs*. In the course of time, however, these and other societies of the kind fell into decay, and it was only after the effects of the French Revolution had begun to crumble away that the memory of the old-time shooting-matches began to revive. The improvement in firearms tended to strengthen the reawakening, and while active-minded Swiss citizens were busy in other directions, establishing their societies for the study of natural science and for matters of public utility, others, whose thoughts turned to national defence, were launching the Swiss Society of Carabineers. The first Federal *Tir* soon followed, and since that time (1824) the festival has grown yearly in strength and importance.

It was pointed out in the early days how

important these gatherings were, not merely for the purpose of improvement in shooting, but for encouraging a love of the beautiful. There is no reason why the two things should not be cultivated at one and the same time, and they have, as a matter of fact, been so cultivated, though it may be with varying degrees of success. Another aim which, it was seen, might be furthered by means of these national gatherings was that of breaking down that spirit of local patriotism—that *Kantönligeist*, as it has been so well called—which for so long stood, and still to some extent stands, in the way of a broader and more general progress. That they were turned to good account in this respect may be seen from the fact that it was at one of these annual gatherings that Dr. Zidler, of Zug, started the movement which led to the constitutional revision of 1848. Other movements of equal importance for the welfare of the country have had their initiation at the banquets of these *Schützenfest*, among others—if the popular memory may be trusted—that which led to the suppression of the Order of Jesuits in Switzerland.

It is well to remember these things, as showing that, notwithstanding that the spirit of these *fêtes* is in the main festive, underneath that spirit of gladness and rejoicing lies a very serious intention and endeavour. Although the competitors and visitors assemble at the place of meeting determined to enjoy the scenery of the district, the beautiful weather, and the open-air life, yet they

never forget that, before all, they are met as Swiss citizens. Hence, when there are urgent public questions to the front, the sport side of the *Schützenfest* is apt to be lost sight of in the heat and urgency of political discussion. For your Schweizer, workman, merchant, or whatever he may be, is first and foremost a politician. He is rarely loth to enjoy "a good time," but he does not forget that he is one of the supports of the State, and that if he neglects his duty the country may neglect him.

If the *Schützenfeste* had a modest beginning, they have grown and strengthened with the years. During the closing years of the century just past, the prizes reached a total of between two and three hundred thousand francs, and the number of cartridges spent in front of the various targets amounted to an average of a million and a half, and I believe at last year's gathering this number was exceeded.

The Society of Carabineers numbered at the end of the century 1348 sections, with a membership of between sixty and seventy thousand. Its invested funds amount to 146,000 francs, and since 1899 it has subsidised the cantonal sections with a view to encourage and stimulate the practice of rifle-shooting and good-fellowship, believing that in so doing it is advancing the interests not only of the Confederation as a whole, but of each individual citizen.

Next in importance after the Federal rifle-

meeting, which is held in June, come the periodical gatherings or tournaments in connection with the various gymnastic societies existing throughout the country, and the different clubs and associations for the encouragement of national sports of all kinds. These assemblies, in what may be termed their national aspect, date from the year 1805, when on one of the few bright days of that rainy year an *Älplerfest*, or feast of shepherds, was held near the ruins of the Castle of Unspunnen, facing the chain of the Jungfrau and its neighbouring peaks. It was simply the antique *fête* of the mountain people enlarged to admit of the participation of other cantons, which were cordially invited. Brilliant was the gathering of spectators, some from the far outland, to witness this unique display, and great was the emotion roused, especially among the Swiss themselves, when at a given signal the procession of singers, players on the Alpine horn, wrestlers, and throwers of the stone made their way into the arena around which the spectators were gathered, amid songs of welcome and the moving notes of the alphorn, which, echoed and re-echoed by the surrounding heights, stirred the hearts of the native-born to their profoundest depths.

The Bernese wrestlers, famed from of old for this sort of thing, bore off the palm from all comers; but it was to a sturdy Appenzeller that fell the prize for casting or putting the stone. Other games followed, and then, as the evening fell, all

Popular Fêtes and Festivals 227

joined in the dance, under the shade of the century-old walnut trees, to the sound of the hackbrett and the violin.

When, three years later, there was a repetition of these games, six thousand spectators assembled on the classic ground of Unspunnen. Madame de Staël was among the number, and it is said that the procession of old Swiss notables, founders of their country's liberties, made a very deep impression upon her, as is noted in her work on Germany.

Down to a very recent date the *Älplerfeste*, or gatherings of mountain shepherds and herdsmen for the purposes of sport, were the only *fêtes* characteristically national held by the Swiss, and of all the games practised thereat that of wrestling is the most ancient. Everywhere throughout the Alps the art is cultivated by young and old alike; but in no district is it brought to such perfection as in the Bernese Oberland, the Emmenthal, and the vale of Entlebuch. The men of the last-named valley in especial are celebrated for their prowess in wrestling, having no superiors in any part of Switzerland. It is a sight to see them on the occasion of one of their periodical *Schwingfeste*, as they are called, of which three or four are generally held in the summer months, the chief of them falling on the first Sunday in September, when the stout men of Entlebuch pit their strength against whoever comes, and generally manage to hold their own. The Emmenthalers,

a particularly sturdy race of men, run them very close, but hitherto have been bound to acknowledge the precedence of their neighbours.

The Swiss method of wrestling is very different from the English. The competitors strip to their shirts and hose. The latter are of twill, and are made of double and even treble thickness at the waist and knees. The right hand of each wrestler grasps the waistband and the left the kneeband of his adversary. The head of each looks over the other's shoulder, while the legs are kept well apart, and the left as far back as possible. The aim of each is to lift his antagonist and get him with his back on the ground. There are many different methods of attack, and of course as many parries.

One of the special features of these *Ælplerfeste* is the procession known as the "departure for the Alps," in which everything connected with the annual start for the mountain pastures is gone through as though it were the actual thing. But in addition various games are played, including that of casting the stone, wrestling, etc.

Nothing seems to please the great body of the Swiss people so much as to see a good wrestling-match. I refer, of course, to the great mass of those whose labour is mainly with their thews and sinews, and who therefore know the value of endurance and physique. A meeting of the kind, such as takes place on the Ramparts at Berne every Easter Monday, is sure to attract a con-

course of spectators. These particular gatherings are famous, and bring together some of the stoutest wrestlers of the Bernese Oberland, of the Emmenthal, as well as of Lucerne and the Unterwaldens. But other cantons also have similar athletic displays. A grand festival of the kind took place at Zurich in 1894, when a Federation of Swiss Wrestlers was formed, with the object, amongst other things, of preserving the national games. The last *fête* of the Federation took place at Berne last year, when, in view of the patriotic aims of those concerned, a particularly interesting gathering took place. The intention is to revive in all its glory the old-time *Älplerfest*, or feast of the mountains. It may be doubted whether they can do that, any more than we can revive the old village-green and maypole time. All the same, it may aid in the work of cementing the Swiss people more thoroughly together as one nation—the great aim now of Federal politicians—to revive and encourage such games and sports as casting the stone, playing the alphorn, “jodeling,” joining in native dances, ballets, and other rustic pastimes, such, for instance, as the Swiss form of rackets, known as *Hornus*, the play with flags, etc.

Very popular, too, are the gymnastic clubs and societies, which, like our cricket and football clubs, lead to a good deal of intercourse between districts and cantons, to many popular gatherings of one kind or another, and every three years to a

grand national *fête*. These gymnastic gatherings date back to the time of Ludwig Jahn, the "father of gymnastics," who, by his enthusiasm for physical culture, did so much for the physical development of German youth. The idea was taken up with zest by the students of the Universities of Zurich, Berne, and Basel, and while timorous politicians regarded their meetings as nothing better than schools of savagery, revolution, and immorality, they were in reality doing a patriotic work for the common country.

It was not long before gymnastic societies sprang up that were not connected with the universities, and, the idea spreading, there was a Federal *fête*. It was thought that, while the Swiss youth were thus strengthening their bodies for the well-being of themselves and their country, they would be drawn together more closely in the bonds of patriotism. For, said the moving spirits and patrons of these *fêtes*, there is nothing like doing things together in order to learn to think in common. This idea was soon developed in another form. It was soon perceived that these gymnastic societies might be made a splendid means for military education, and simple gymnastic exercises branched out into warlike games.

At first there were national *fêtes* every year, first one city or town being the scene of the function, and then another. Then the popular meeting was held every other year, and finally, since 1888, every three years. But what the gather-



A SWISS HOUSE

ings thus lose as regards frequency they gain in brilliance and strength. They now stand out as among the most interesting and the most popular of Swiss *fêtes*. They are, in especial, the *fêtes* of youth, of abounding life, of enthusiasm. It is long since gymnastics were the exclusive appanage of the universities. In all the great centres of industrial life such societies have done much to improve the physique and, consequently, the general health of the workers. At the last meeting but one, held in 1897 at Schaffhausen, there were 5736 competitors, of whom over 700 took part in individual contests. Two hundred societies took part in sectional contests, while over 300, including foreign societies, were represented at the *fête*. These figures were considerably exceeded at the next triennial gathering, held at Chaux-de-Fonds in 1900. At that time the Federal Society of Gymnastics numbered 539 sections, with a membership of close upon 40,000.

One of the most striking features of later gatherings have been the exercises in groups. At Geneva, in 1891, they were the "hit" of the *fête*.

At Lugano, three years later, some three thousand gymnasts assisted at similar evolutions, and may be said with truth to have caused a sensation. Everything helped thereto—the place of meeting, with its century-old trees casting a grateful shade, the surrounding hills, built as of emerald and amethyst, and the overarching vault of heaven without a fleck on its depth of blue. Still, few

would have anticipated the shout of pleasure which burst from the throats of the thousands of spectators present when the army of gymnasts deployed, charged, and then broke into the full run without a false movement being seen or the least deflection of line.

Lugano seemed to touch the high-water mark in more ways than one. Lugano is Italian in the richness of its nature and in the spirit and temperament of its people, and there was at once manifest a fine rivalry when these fine-built southerners came in touch with the stalwart Teutons of the northern slopes of the Alps, with the *élan* and verve of the men of the French cantons. This heightened the zest of the festival, gave it a touch of emotion not often present, and it was thought that there would never be another Lugano. But when it was seen at Schaffhausen that the number of competitors had increased—being only one or two hundred short of four thousand—while the *exercices d'ensemble* were still as faultlessly executed, the entire mass of spectators broke into thunders of applause. And why? Because it was felt that men who could act together with such perfection of unanimity and discipline constituted a material of the rarest kind for national defence. And that is a thought ever uppermost in the mind of the patriot Swiss.

It is curious to note how the peculiar idiosyncrasy, or the native genius, of the various cantons makes itself felt from time to time, and as the

Popular Fêtes and Festivals 233

need arises. To Aargau is due the honour of having suggested and started the Federal rifle-meeting; to Berne chiefly belongs the credit of keeping alive the national sport of wrestling; the Gruyères country is famous for its *Ranz des vaches*, Appenzell for its melodious *Jodel*, as, indeed, for its love of song generally. Hence it was fitting and in accordance with the genius of its people that Appenzell should take the lead in regard to the establishment of festivals of popular song.

The first event of the kind took place so long ago as 1825 at Speicher-Vögelinseck, not far from the Lake of Constance. It aroused the greatest enthusiasm, and other cantons were soon following the example of Appenzell. Then, while the Federal idea was, as it were, thick in air, a Federal *fête* of popular song—a kind of Swiss *Eisteddfod*—was inaugurated, and has continued ever since, holding its gatherings every two years, now in one town, now in another, and doing much not only to refine and elevate the people, but to encourage oneness of national sentiment and feeling. It is not many years since the President of the Confederation, at one of these meetings, praised these societies of popular song for having promoted unity where formerly division prevailed—that is, between town and village—and for having tended so largely to ennoble the Swiss people by disseminating a love of music.

They have certainly developed a passionate love

of music among all classes, and have besides had the effect of bringing out not only a large number of excellent composers, but of producing also a multitude of very beautiful songs—songs which would no doubt have met with the warm approval of Luther, who, holding that “notes give life to words,” thought “the composer ought not to set to music sentiments that are not worth the trouble of calling to life.” How many are the songs that have proved, by the way they take hold of the hearts of the people, that they well deserve to be vivified by music may be witnessed, not only at the great festivals of song, but almost daily at the more local gatherings and *fêtes*, and in the homes of the people.

Such songs as *Stehe fest, O Vaterland!* (“Stand firm, O Fatherland”), *Siegesfeier der Freiheit* (“The Triumph of Liberty”), *Die Schlacht bei St. Jakob* (“The Battle of St. Jacob”—the Thermopylæ of Swiss history), the *Serment du Grütli*, *Auf der Kirchweih zu Schwyz* (“At the Church-feast of Schwyz”), *O mein Heimatland* (“O dear Home-land”), *Trittst im Morgenrot daher* (“Thither in the Rosy Morn thou goest”), etc., may be heard at well-nigh every musical gathering. The last especially has become a national hymn.

These songs are all of German-Swiss origin, and it must be confessed that German Switzerland bears the palm for this kind of talent, although *la Suisse romande* does not lag far behind. Nor

is it in any way behind the other parts of the Fatherland in its love of music. This may be seen by any passing visitor who spends an evening in the English Garden at Geneva, or—a treat which foreigners more rarely enjoy—attends one of the frequent concerts of sacred music in the cathedral church of St. Peter. For this love of music is not confined to popular songs, but extends to, and has a deep root in, sacred compositions. This taste has been cultivated by generations of talented composers, and by the presence and encouragement of such men as Wagner, Liszt, and others of the foremost rank in the world of music. As in other countries, so in Switzerland, church music had, by the free introduction of melody, and by the use of instrumental accompaniment, become brilliant at the expense of what may be termed solidity. In other words, its note was superficiality rather than sincerity and depth, and while it pleased the many, those of simpler lives and truer instincts began to show signs of revolt. It was complained that what was called stylish music—*la chant stylé*—had almost put an end to the once popular music of the home and the familiar social gathering, to the no small regret of the more unsophisticated children of the mountain vales.

A striking instance of the reaction against this tendency was witnessed at a recent festival at Berne, when the mixed chorus of a *Gesangverein* (Vocal Union), the girls of which appeared in

their quaint native costumes, took the audience by storm; the air '*s Vreneli ab' em Guggisberg* in especial producing something like the effect of a sudden revelation. Such awakenings are always a healthy sign, and though there can be no going back wholly to the music of the past, it is ever well for the outworn giant of civilisation, like Antæus, to seek refreshment and renewal at the breast of the great mother. Such a revival is, in particular, making itself felt in regard to church music: the societies of St. Cecilia all over the Confederation working with zeal for a return to the Gregorian chant and to the diatonic of the ancient music of the Church.

This, however, as a note by the way. As regards the Federal musical festivals, it is thought that they have in the past favoured too exclusively the cultivation of the male voice, to the detriment of mixed choirs, and it is probable that a change will be called for in this respect. There are those, indeed, who think that the Federal *fête* idea has been overdone, especially as regards these vocal societies, and that some reform or modification is necessary. At the last gathering, held at Berne in 1899, a huge building had to be erected to accommodate six thousand singers and ten thousand spectators. The effect produced by these great masses of voice was, of course, prodigious, but it was felt by many that this form of national rivalry is carried too far, and—considering that there are other Federal gatherings all

tending to grow larger and larger—perhaps the criticism is justified.

There is still another kind of celebration very popular among these free and vigorous people, and that is the *Festspiel*. The *Festspiel* is the national drama of the Swiss; it takes place in the open air; and its whole aim and object is to glorify and keep in remembrance the great historical events of the country, and to rejoice the common heart by the representation of stirring scenes from the everyday life of the people. In the Middle Ages the Swiss, like other European people, had their carnivals (relics of a still more ancient time), their Mystery and Morality plays, and, as a growth from these, their “days of commemoration”; these latter being marked by public representations of events calculated to warm the patriotic heart. At Lumbrin, in the Romansch part of the Grisons, there is still a representation of our Lord’s Passion, which is held every thirty years, the last performance whereof took place in 1882, when a very deep impression was made upon the large throng of spectators who witnessed it. There is still a survival of the old carnival plays to be seen in the canton of Berne, in what is known as the Shrove Monday procession (*Hirs-montagsumzug*). Formerly it comprised biblical dramas; later these—probably under Protestant influence—gave place to patriotic representations, and in particular to scenes from the life of William Tell. These were intermingled with the

buffooneries of Merry-andrews and Jack-puddings, and with wild and often burlesque dances. As another type of the same sort of thing may be mentioned the *Fête des Vignerons* of Vevey, referred to in another place.

With the re-establishment of the Confederation on its old basis in the early part of last century, and the entrance into it of several new cantons, the *Festspiel* leapt into renewed life. In 1828, at Küssnacht, for instance, scenes from the life of Tell were represented beneath the open sky. More recently the people of Altstätten commemorated the battle of Stoss on the very scene of the fight. Gradually the taste for this more modern form of the *Festspiel* has extended, and with it has grown a desire to make its representations conform more rigidly to the laws of dramatic art. William Tell is a stock subject, Schiller's play being the text generally chosen. Cham, Brugg, and Altstätten, among other places, have distinguished themselves by staging it, so to speak, on its "native heath"; while at Altdorf and Hochdorf special buildings have been put up to accommodate these popular representations.

With the provision of such accessories, however, the special feature of the *Festspiel* disappears. It is essentially an outdoor performance, a thing for the winds to play on, and for the sunshine to illumine. When it ceases to be that it becomes the theatre simply, which is another matter.

Popular Fêtes and Festivals 239

The *Festspiel*, as at present understood, may be said to date from the year 1886, when a grand popular festival took place at Sempach in honour of the five hundredth anniversary of the battle in which Arnold of Winkelried performed the deed of valour celebrated in Wordsworth's lines:

“ He of battle-martyrs chief !
Who, to recall his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space,
By gathering with a wide embrace,
Into his single heart, a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears.”

The old-time *Festspiel* consisted of a procession and a cantata; but in this instance the composer of the music for the occasion, Arnold, produced a full-blown drama, which was so ably and so artistically interpreted by the Lucerners that henceforth the *Festspiel* was a new thing. What was done at Sempach was improved upon at Schwyz in 1891 (August 1st and 2d) on the occasion of the *fête* celebrating the birth of the Confederation, and at the festival commemorating the foundation of the city of Berne on the 23d and 24th of the same month. In each case men of the highest talent prepared the music and words of the compositions, and in each case the dramatic ensemble was so vivid and lifelike, the scenes from which the nation took its birth, so to speak, so naturally and yet so powerfully depicted, that the spectators were stirred with the deepest emotion on seeing them.

Other similar celebrations followed in quick succession. Amongst them may be mentioned the *Festspiel* of Little Basel in 1893, in which Wackernagel and Franz Huber collaborated in the production of the words and music respectively. In 1895, on the occasion of the Federal *Tir* at Winterthur, a *Festspiel* was performed glorifying the history of that town, the text of the work being by Leonhardt Steiner, and the music by Lothar Kempter. In 1898, Neuchâtel celebrated the fifth centenary of the republic of Neuchâtel in twelve tableaux, the poem and the music respectively being the work of Philippe Godet and M. Lauber. The *Marche des Armourins* of this piece was justly admired, and has ever since been a popular favourite. *La Suisse romande* throws itself into these *Festspiele* with as much fervour and enthusiasm as the German-speaking cantons, and one of the most noted makers of them is A. Ribaux. His dramatic composition, *Julia Alpinula*, was played in the old Roman amphitheatre at Avenches; his *Charles le Téméraire* at Grandson, the scene of the battle; and his third *Festspiel*, *Reine Berthe*, at Payerne, the scene of the legend which forms the theme of the piece. This latter was performed in 1899, and was greatly admired both for its fine declamatory passages and for its ballets and dances.

The same year a series of *Festspiele* took place in commemoration of the battles of the Swabian War. The first was held at Calven, and it speaks

much for the entrancing nature of the performance that the spectators were enabled to sit it out in spite of a continuous downpour of rain. The secret of the spell lay in the cunning use the authors had made of the songs, costumes, legends, and even of the games of the district celebrated. This *fête* was followed by one at Schwaderlock, in Thurgau, when the standards of all the cantons that had contingents at the battle of Dornach (1499) were seen upon the open-air stage near the ancient castle from which the fight took its name, mingling in the stirring scenes of turmoil and war which came up for representation. Then another phase of the same theme was celebrated by the people of Soleure on a meadow near their chief town. For the text of this *Festspiel* Adrian von Arx was responsible, as was A. Munzinger for that of Schwaderlock, and both plays were remarkable for that warlike movement and "go," which, mingled with song and the sharp staccato of the drum, never fail to fire the martial heart of the Swiss. The battle of Dornach was again celebrated in July of the present year, on the occasion of the festivities in commemoration of the entrance of Basel into the Confederation.

Other *fêtes* of the kind might be referred to, as, for instance, that of the Escalade, which the Genevese celebrate processionally every year on the night of December 11th and 12th; but enough has, perhaps, been said to show how largely the *Festspiel* figures in the life and habits of the Swiss,

and how deep is the impression it is calculated to make upon the character of a people who, whatever their present faults and shortcomings, can always point to a sturdy and heroic past, while to-day they still manifest strivings towards an ideal which greater nations might emulate to their advantage.





CHAPTER XVII

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS

IN dealing with this twofold subject it will be convenient to reverse what would appear to be the natural order, and commencing with the Press, refer later to some of the more salient features which strike the stranger in the current literature of Switzerland. This plan commends itself the more because what there is of specifically Swiss literature is allied very closely with, and may almost be said to spring out of, the periodical and newspaper Press of the country. This may also be the case in other countries, but not, I think, to the same degree as in Switzerland, where the people are for the most part so poor and so hard-worked that they have little leisure for reading, even if they had the means to purchase books. All, however, or nearly all, manage to supply themselves with the newspaper, and to read it. It is rare to pass through a village of any size in which there is not a shop for the sale of newspapers; almost rarer still to enter a house in which a newspaper will not be seen lying about or on the shelf with the usual books of devotion.

This habit of newspaper-reading among the Swiss has grown enormously of late years. Half a century ago the post-office had to deal with between ten and eleven millions of newspapers and periodicals annually. In 1895, the number had grown to eighty-nine and a half millions, which for a population of three millions is a very respectable figure, though it has largely increased during the intervening six years.

In 1896 there were 1003 newspapers and serial publications appearing simultaneously in Switzerland, and the number has since been considerably augmented. Out of the total five only are over a century old. These are the *Freitagzeitung* of Zurich, founded in 1683, the *Journal d'Yverdon* (1773), the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (1780), the *Nouvelliste Vaudois*, and the *Gazette de Lausanne* (1798). Of the total number of newspapers appearing in Switzerland 584 are printed in German, 326 in French, 43 in several languages, 36 in Italian, 6 in English, 3 in Romansch, and 2 in other languages. The larger proportion of these publications are of local importance only, while a certain number are merely periodicals devoted to entertainment or amusement, some of them, as may be imagined, of a not very high order.

The most important newspapers in the Confederation are: in French, the *Journal de Genève*, the *Gazette de Lausanne*; in German, the *Basler Nachrichten*, *National Zeitung*, and the *Allgemeine Schweizer Zeitung* of Basel, *Der Bund* and the

Berner Tagblatt of Bern, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and *Die Zürcher Post* of Zurich, and the *Vaterland* of Lucerne. Of these the *Bund*, the *Basler Nachrichten*, the *National Zeitung*, and the *Zürcher Post* are Radical; the *Journal de Genève*, the *Gazette de Lausanne*, and the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* are Liberal; while the *Allgemeine Schweizer Zeitung* and the *Vaterland*, the former Protestant, and the latter Catholic, are Conservative. The *Vaterland* is regarded as the special organ of the Catholic Conservatives of German Switzerland, just as *Der Bund* is the mouthpiece of Radicalism throughout the German-speaking cantons. Ever since its inception the *Bund* has been a power in the Confederation, and has done yeoman service in the cause of progress and enlightenment, although it may at times have allowed itself to become too deeply submerged in the *Kantönligeist* of Bernese party politics.

Among other newspapers worthy of note may be mentioned the *Bündner Nachrichten* of Chur, the recognised organ of the Radical party in the Grisons; and the *Neuchâtelois*, the *Suisse Libérale*, and the *National Suisse*, all of Neuchâtel, and representing the Conservative, the Liberal, and the Radical sections of the community respectively. The last-named journal was for many years edited by, and still numbers amongst its most assiduous collaborators, the well-known publicist M. Numa Droz. The *Suisse Libérale* also long had for editor a man otherwise of note

in the literary world, namely, M. Philippe Godet, the author, among other works, chiefly poetic, of *l'Histoire littéraire de la Suisse française*.

In addition to the *Liberal Gazette de Lausanne*, Vaud possesses two other organs of some importance. There is the *Nouvelliste Vaudois*, which voices the modified Radicalism of what may be called the country party—the cultivators, that is, who live and work, not on the telegraph wire, but according to the slow and deliberate procession of the seasons. For that section of the same party which finds the *Campagnard* and his bucolic ways and ideas slow, there is the *Revue*, ardent and advanced enough for most of its mode of thinking, albeit not “way-breaking” in any special sense. Equally advanced, and much more readable, is the *Génevois*, a really spirited little paper, full of matter, and always enjoyable, whether one agrees with all its views or not. When weary of English polemics, it is a treat to take up the *Génevois* and see the able way in which it deals with subjects of current interest. In general the Swiss newspaper, indeed, fills to its readers the place occupied in our lives by the popular magazine, and its literature is often of a very high order. This will in part be understood when it is said that the bearers of some of the foremost names in Swiss letters have been identified with the newspaper Press as editors and collaborators. I have already mentioned several; to them may be added Gottfried Keller, the greatest

among Swiss writers of the nineteenth century, who was for a time on the staff of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, which journal had the honour also of giving to the Swiss Confederation, in the person of Jonas Furrer, its first President.

Among the newspapers distinguished for their purely literary contents, the *Journal de Genève* ranks of long right with the first. For many years it had, in M. Jacques Adert, an editor who, besides being a born administrator, was a man of high literary gifts, and a Hellenist of the first water. Under his direction it gradually fought its way to the eminent position in the newspaper world which it still continues to occupy, thanks to the talented publicist who to-day directs its fortunes.

If the *Gazette de Lausanne* does not hold so prominent a position internationally as the last-named organ, it enjoys an equally important place in the esteem of those who love good and healthy literature, and who like to be kept informed as to the general movement of thought. This in especial is the leading feature of the Vaudois organ of Liberalism, and it has gained for it a place second, perhaps, to none among cultivated readers. That the *Gazette* has been able to win for itself a portion of such distinction is due to its having been fortunate enough to secure for its editorial chair a succession of men of conspicuous ability, although all of them, perhaps, were not so gifted as Victor Tissot, the author of a *Voyage*

au pays des milliards. But while these, and the other newspapers I have mentioned, hold high rank for their literary contents, possibly most judges would accord the first place, even in this respect, to the *Bund*, whose literary supplement, edited, I believe, for upwards of twenty years by Herr J. V. Widmann, has done much to make that journal acceptable and even popular in quarters where its politics would never have secured it a welcome.

One might speak of the minor Press, of the small local papers, insignificant in appearance, and apparently of little importance, but in reality powerful in their way, because their readers are apt to take all they say as gospel, and so to be swayed in their political opinions by them. Of this class especially are the Tessinese papers. Ardent and enthusiastic in their advocacy of the side they take, they are good specimens of the more militant type of Swiss journalism. The difficulty of the Tessin newspaper is that its influence is strictly confined within the boundaries of the canton, while it suffers from the competition of the journals of Turin and Milan. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, however, a number of Tessinese papers have had a long and brilliant career. The newspapers at present in the ascendant are the *Liberta*, Catholic-Conservative in politics, the *Dovere* and the *Riforma*, both Radical, though with somewhat different shades of the faith, and finally the *Corriere del Ticino*, which, since 1892,

has been the propagandist organ of the Liberal Conservatives.

It is a virile, vivid Press, this of Canton Tessin, albeit a little too much inclined, perhaps, to take things, as one of its own journalists once put it, "on the point of the sword." This man was one of the most apt in this respect; he had, however, the wit to see it, and so he used to make a trip annually to north-east Switzerland, and there for a week or two took a course of the whey cure. Gais was his favourite sojourn — Gais in Appenzell-ausser-Rhoden, famous for its cure of goats' whey. It is not clear that he got any good from drinking the whey; but he used to aver that the calmer moral atmosphere of the north-east worked wonders with him for a time. I cannot say whether other Swiss journalists are in the habit of going to quaint little Gais for moral restoration, although I have known those of Geneva to take an occasional course of the "grape cure" in Canton Vaud. They used to say it was "going back to nature"; but when I told my Tessinese friend of this, he exclaimed, with a laugh, "Back to nature! Back to Mother Nature, eh? Is that their notion? Then why don't they go to Heinrichsbad?" There was a subtle irony in the saying, for Heinrichsbad is noted for its cure of asses' milk.

These cures play a great part in the national life, but if they had nothing worse to heal than the faults of the Swiss Press, their failure would be a matter of little moment; for, taken as a

whole, it is a calm, clear-headed, and high-minded Press. It has been said of it that, if it is not *très palpitante*, one more honest or more disinterested it would be hard to find. And the judgment is a true one. The transparent honesty of the Swiss Press is its most abiding characteristic. It has no interest other than that of the common weal, and there are no yellow strands in its woof. Those who direct its fortunes are proud of the position their country holds in the world of international politics, and knowing that such position has been won by the good sense, civic virtue, and sturdy moral worth of the Swiss people, they, as the voice of that people, endeavour to do what they can, in a humble way, to heighten that position, and to make it still more useful for the general welfare. This very creditable position which the Swiss newspaper Press holds it owes, I believe, very largely to the intimate connection which has always subsisted between it and the best writers which the country has produced. I have already referred to the connection of Keller, Switzerland's greatest romancist, with the Press. One might mention the names of others who, in more stirring times than these, fought as what Heine would have called Knights of the Holy Ghost in the ranks of journalism, such as Zschokke, author of the *History of the Swiss for the Swiss People*; François Roget, author of the *Pensées Gênévoises*; John Coindet, the historian of Italian art, etc.



SUMMER PASTURES IN THE MOUNTAINS

These, however, are names of the past, and if there are none as great as Gottfried Keller still living to illumine the page of the country's literature, he has at least many worthy successors. Switzerland, however, labours under a great disadvantage in regard to literature. Its people as a whole are not literary. Possibly this springs from the circumstance that, with the majority, life is too hard and too serious for letters to find a niche in their hearts. Hence it arises that, though Switzerland has produced poets, historians, romancists of high quality, its most talented writers have too often only been revealed to its people by the admiration they have evoked abroad. This is particularly true of Keller and Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, both of whom were thought little of until the Germans began to revel in their creations. In short, a Swiss writer has little or no hope in his own country of that large fame which is as the very bread of life to his soul: for that—and especially if he would win fortune too—he must appeal to the wider and more appreciative public of Germany and France.

Keller complained that his native land was a hard bed for the poet, and Leutboden, singer of the harmony supreme, addressed to his country verses full of anger and fierce invective because of her indifference to those who sing for her psalm-odies of sweetest measure drawn from suffering hearts. It is for this reason that the best literary products of *la Suisse romande* become merged in

the literature of France. Perhaps, however, it is not quite exact to say "the best," because there is a quality of poetry, like that of Juste Olivier, which cannot be detached from the place of its birth, where, as he himself wrote:

'Un génie est caché dans tous ces lieux que j'aime . . .

But, in truth, we have only to think of the Rousseaus, the Madame de Staëls, the Benjamin Constants, and a score of others, to learn how deplorable is Switzerland's fate in this respect. Even the original and strikingly characteristic Rodolph Toepffer, author of the well-known *Voyages en zigzag*, Ste.-Beuve annexed, as belonging to the literature of France. The works of two other Genevese writers, Marc Monnier and Victor Cherbuliez, now passed whence their living voices can no more be heard, gravitated as by right of language to the literary heritage of the great neighbour. And yet what matters it? If the Fatherland produces worthy sons, who go forth into the world and do great work, the people at home cannot but profit, even though others claim them as of a larger citizenship. Moreover, apart from these, there are others who, like Juste Olivier, cannot be alienated, so strongly and peculiarly do they cling, like the edelweiss and the alpenrose, to the native soil. Among such I may name Charles Spitteler, a man of marked originality, both as to style and matter; Otto Hagenmacher, and O. Suttermeister, who has rendered

a signal service to literature by making a collection of folk-poesy in the German Swiss dialect. Nor should we forget Adolphe Frey, son of the famous Jacob Frey, or Isabelle Kaiser, of Zug, who writes poetry full of imaginative depth and lyrical ardour.

Another authoress, daughter of a man who may almost be said to have invented a new form of literature, the peasant epopee,—so popular were the stories of Jeremias Gotthelf in the earlier part of last century,—unites to a more chastened style not a little of her father's humour. Her tales are very pretty and very readable, but alas! they are lacking in that pervading strength which made the pastor of Lützelflüh such a power in his day. Many imitators he has had, and not the least of these was Keller, if we may call him an imitator, who so greatly improved even upon his master. Not a few of these writers have a native tang, a local colour, very hard of appreciation by the stranger who has not lived the life of their mountains and of their mountain cots, but when once the native atmosphere has been caught, they go to the heart like a melody of childhood's days.

Many other names might be mentioned, but it must suffice to single out one or two only, and first let me refer in a line to Auguste Bechlin, whose romance of village life in Neuchâtel, entitled *Jean-Louis*, is a psychological study of the highest value, and one that ought to live. Some of the best things in Swiss literature are these pic-

tures of village life; and another excellent limner of them is Oscar Huguenin, also a Neuchâtelais. The like gift for the portrayal of peasant character is witnessed in the writings of a lady of the same name as the latter, although she writes under the pseudonym of T. Combe. In her later works, however, this writer has gone a step beyond her earlier ones, and in such stories as the *Sentier qui Monte* and *Œuvre d'amour*, she takes upon herself the mantle of the social reformer, and as such ranks with the foremost writers of Switzerland. Edouard Rod has been referred to elsewhere, and I must pass over some others, such as Virgile Rossel, Louis Duchosal, and Philippe Monnier, well deserving of mention, to say one word about Alice de Chambrier, whose volume of poems, *Au Delà*, caused something of a sensation when it first appeared, and has since been called for in edition after edition, though its talented author died almost at its birth, at the age of twenty.

One would have liked to add something about the literature of Tessin and Graubünden, but at least I must quote a spirited little poem from the Romansch tongue by way of a closing word to this brief sketch of Swiss literature. It is by Antoine Huonder, the greatest poet of the Romansch people, and sings in simple yet passionate verse the liberty of the Grison peasant:

“ Quei ei miu grepp, quei ei miu crap
Chen tschentel jeu miu pei ;

Artau hai jeu vus de miu bab
Sai a negin marschei.

“ Quei ei miu prau, quei miu clavau
Quei miu regress e dretg ;
Sai a nagin perquei d'engrau
Sun cheu jeu mez il retg.

“ Quei mes affons, miu agien saun
De miu car Diu schengetg,
Nutreschel els cun agien paun,
Els dorman sut miu tetg.

“ O libra, libra paupradat
Artada da mes vegls,
Defender vi cun taffradat
Sco popa de mes egls.

“ Gie libers sundel jeu naschius,
Ruaseivels vi dormir,
E libers sundel si carschius
E libers vi morir.”

The only merit of the following translation is that it is fairly literal, and so gives some idea of the indomitable spirit that has ever animated, and still characterises, these descendants of the Rhæti:

“ To me belong these rocks, to me this stony soil ;
Here I walk with a firm foot,
For this is the earth of my fathers,
And for it I owe homage to none.

“ These fields and these meadows—
To me alone they belong ;
As a free citizen I exercise here my rights,
I am king over my inheritance.

“ Here are my children, confided to me by God ;
It is my blood that flows in their veins,
It is my bread which nourishes them,
It is under my roof they repose.

“ O free, O gentle simplicity,
Richest treasure of my fathers !
With joy would I sacrifice myself to thee,
Even to the last drop of my blood.

“ Free I came into the world,
Free I have laboured for my daily bread,
Free, too, I sleep under the eternal stars,
And free will take the hand of death.”

Who would not wish to sing such a pæan of
freedom—and wish it for all the world ?





CHAPTER XVIII

TYPES AND CHARACTERS

ONE cannot live long in Switzerland without meeting, here and there, some very striking types of character—types which, though they may be seen elsewhere, strike one as having a stamp and hall-mark essentially Swiss. I have referred to one, the Genevese *huissier*, on a preceding page. Though a very humble servant of the State, he was a man of some education and of vast observation. A patriot of the first water, who had been out with the hastily mobilised *corps d'armée*, called out when General Bourbaki and his host crossed the frontier to avoid capture by the Germans in 1871, he had the most unbounded admiration for his country and for his countrymen—if they agreed with him. For his nation's great deeds, as well as for the notable features of the country, he had no less an admiration. There was one word which best expressed and almost invariably clinched his eulogy; it was *magnific*—brought out with a very large note of admiration. William Tell *était magnific*; De Candole *était magnific*.

He hated Calvin, but he was all the same *magnific*. Every hill and vale and lake in the country was *magnific*, albeit few of them beyond the Dôle and the Lake of Geneva had come under his eye. It would seem, perhaps, as though he had no sense of perspective; but in truth that was not lacking in him, nor was he without a certain humorous outlook and appreciation.

This was shown one day when he was describing the Hôtel de Ville to an English visitor. He was explaining that the way up to the council chamber was by a gradual ascent instead of by steps. It was thus arranged, said he, so that in olden times the councillors might mount *sur leurs ânes* (upon their asses). To which remark the stranger dryly replied, "*Et maintenant, I suppose, les ânes montent seuls?*" ("Now, I suppose, the asses go up alone?"). The *huissier* looked grave for a moment, but then broke into a hearty laugh. He hastened to report the jest to a member of the city council, adding that, though the remark was a little rude, *c'était magnific*. This man once took me at night through the Electoral Palace after a Federal election. The doors were wide open for the people to pass in and out, the place was well lighted, and, guarding the ballot-urns, which had been sealed by the authorities, were a number of soldiers with fixed bayonets. The scrutiny was not to take place until the morning. There was such an air of openness, simplicity, and security about the affair



SWISS GUIDES

that one could not help thinking of my friend's favourite word *magnific*.

This man was one of the best types of the Swiss bourgeois class I met with. He was thoroughly imbued with the idea of each standing and striving for all and all for each. "We do our utmost for the children while they are young," he would say, "and when we are old they will do the best they can for us. What could be better? We spend ourselves while we have strength, and have confidence that we shall not be neglected when the day of decline comes." There was in him, too, a touch of pride at the thought that the little Republic might have its mission to the larger nations.

Another Swiss type, very pleasing to me, was that presented by a small peasant farmer of the Jura, not above an hour from Geneva. I, with a companion, made his acquaintance one night after a day of wandering. We had, in fact, lost our way among the hills, and by chance stumbled into the midst of a herd of his cattle. A lad conducted us to the house, where we were royally entertained with such as the place afforded, put up comfortably for the night, and in the morning *au revoir'd* with a cordiality that left nothing to be desired. When we had offered to pay for our entertainment, this homely and rough-handed peasant declined with a "Many thanks, gentlemen; but let it be for the honour of the thing."

Subsequently I saw much of this man. It happened that on this first visit we slept late in the

morning, and, as the farmer's wife told us, missed a fine view of the sunrise on Mont Blanc in consequence. Seeing that this was a disappointment to me, the worthy host invited me to pay him a visit any time I liked—my friend, an American student, being then on his way home. "There is a spare bedroom always ready," he added, "and, such as it is, at your service."

We hear much nowadays of going back to nature. To town-bred people it seems a hard thing to do. But one had only to go and live with this peasant farmer to feel how much and how completely one may be in touch with nature. His house, a substantial structure of wood built upon a stone foundation, was as truly a part of nature as the martin's nest in the sandy cliff, the gleam from his window o' nights as autochthonic as the tiny lights of the glow-worms that, stuck on our hats, so often served to illumine our after-dark way. There was not a touch of luxury in the whole place, unless it were the luxury of coarse linen sheets in which to sleep, in a bedroom with the barest modicum of furniture, and with nothing in the shape of carpet or rug on the floor, save a clean sheep-skin by the bed. To anyone sick of stuffy rooms and overdone furnishment these things were a luxury, and especially the feeling of airiness about you—the airiness of the hill-tops and the spacious vales, the fine aroma of the breath of life filling the pine-clad slopes. Everywhere, too, was the sweet smell of cattle and of

growing things, meadows in the spring radiant with flowers, in the later months redolent of hay.

Nor was the harder, the more tragic side of nature wanting. For how often, as the year drew round again towards the later equinox, the time for their southward migration, have I not seen thousands, nay, myriads of birds, swallows chiefly, covering rocks, trees, house-eaves, every little coign that could serve as a resting-place, with their tired and panting bodies? Some of them, already worn out, would never win across the great barrier of snow-clad peaks gleaming right in front of them, white and jagged as a carnivore's teeth, and so short a distance away. Many could be picked up, just as they had dropped, almost as light as the air they navigated, with nothing on their tiny bones save a bit of skin and some feathers. Their little fires were out. Thousands thus fall ere they reach the Jura, thousands more must yield the vital spark ere they touch the passes of the neighbouring range.

The plainness of the fare, too, on which these people thrive—and it is much the same all through the Alps—is another reminder of how close, when with them, one may get back to nature and natural ways. Bread, cream, curds, butter, cheese, dried or fresh fruits—these are the things on which you chiefly feed. Meat is a rarity. Coffee is almost the only exotic, and that, made with milk alone, and thickened with cream to your liking, serves as a timely reminder of the

distance you are from civilisation, though so near. I found it much the same in most parts of the Alps: if you happened to fall into the good graces of the herdsman in the mountains, he would give you a cup of coffee to remember.

In stature the Jura farmer was a little above the medium size, squarely built, with a broad, high forehead and strongly marked features. They would have appeared hard but for his fine grey eyes, inclining to blue. Slow of speech, his words came out much as a careful man would count down money. They dropped from him like coined gold. He said he did not care much for Geneva. "They jabber so much in the town," said he; "they are always jabbering. But," he added, "I once heard a man speak there—a preacher—who gave me enough to think about for a year." It was not his habit to talk about his religious views; one could see from the few words he now and then let fall that they were very distinct and strangely idiosyncratic of the man. Once a month he went to church. "It is enough," said he. "Church-going may become a sin like everything else. Religion is living well and doing good, not listening to words."

"I don't want people to say," he remarked on one occasion, "how religious I am, because I go so regularly to church, but I want them to think I would do nothing mean or underhand to obtain an advantage, and that I would not refuse to help a neighbour in trouble so far as I could." One

thing about his religious character was very striking. "My dear mother," he said once, "never troubled me much about religion, but she got me to learn the four Gospels by heart, and she asked me to repeat portions of them to myself from time to time, so as not to forget them. That I have done ever since I was a boy," he added, "and I find it simplifies matters very much just to try and act as near as possible in accord with the spirit there inculcated, leaving all the glosses of word-spinners to those who like them."

I give these views of my Jura farmer friend because they are so strikingly characteristic of the directness and simplicity of the Swiss mind as I found it in so many fresh and vigorous specimens of manhood, not only of West but of East Switzerland. I hold them to be the more worth giving because, as it seems to me, the spirit of simplicity, not only in regard to religion, but in other matters also, is growing, and it may be that these Swiss thinkers and "doers" are going to have their influence upon the world as they had in past time; for we all know what a tremendous thing came out of Geneva "in the days that are gone."

I met at this house another characteristic Swiss type, a feminine one. I never saw a second like her, and I doubt whether I ever shall. She was a little above the medium height, beautifully formed, with a face that would have been beautiful, too, but for the passionate intelligence expressed in it. I can describe what I mean in no

other way. A woman endowed with so high a quality of intellect I never knew; and I certainly never knew one, and can hardly conceive of one, in whom intellect and the passion of enthusiasm were so intimately commingled. Her face had all the tender and harmonious lines of a beauty well-nigh ideal; but the brow was too pronounced, and with her grey eyes gave an expression to her countenance that was almost masculine. Her hair, the colour of her eyes, intensified the expression. I never learned much about Mademoiselle C.'s past. That she was Genevese by birth and parentage, that she had spent some years of her early womanhood in England, where she had seen much good society, and that she had been in Paris during the Commune—these things I knew, but little else. The Commune had made an indelible impression upon her, and it was easy to see that her sympathies were largely with the Communards. She declared that Paris was never so well governed as under their rule. But what a martyrdom that episode must have been to her!

Her description of the last days of the Commune, when the Republican troops were pressing in the Communards on every side, and when one of the last stands was made at a barricade at the end of the street in which she lived, and they could see the fighting from the balcony, was a thing never to be forgotten. One afternoon, when the sunshine was filling all the street, a sudden

rattle of *chassepôt* fire called them to the window. Looking towards the barricade, they saw a Communist soldier throw away his rifle, tear off his blouse, and make off hastily along the street. Opposite the house he was met by a Republican officer coming the other way, who commanded him to stand, and bade him hold up his hands. This was to see if they showed the marks of having held a rifle. Mademoiselle and her friends could not hear the short colloquy that took place, but it was all too plain what it meant, and the *dénouement*—the young Communard struck down with a pistol-shot point-blank—came like a flash of lightning. “The officer hurried on, the young fellow writhed on the ground like a crushed worm,” said Mademoiselle. “We watched our chance, and when there was no one about we went out and fetched the dying soldier in. It turned out to be the brother of my friends.” Afterwards these people got into trouble for removing the dying man. An officer and a file of soldiers called, and would have carried him off, and his friends with him, but for the spirit of this Swiss heroine. She threw herself in front of them, and cried: “But, gentlemen, what sort of conduct is this? Take me too; I helped to carry him in—I, who am not a relative, out of compassion and humanity. What would you have them do, then—they who are his sisters? Would you have your sisters be heartless were you at the point of death? *Messieurs, messieurs! Soldats, mes hommes!*” In

the end they stationed a sentry at the door, and that was all.

Mademoiselle—I can imagine Madame Roland being like her—had two regrets: one that she was not a man, the other that she had not a son. “He should have been a man!” she once exclaimed. “But it was not to be. The men who sought me as wife were not men enough for me.” Her ideals of manhood were found among the Englishmen she had known in the days of her early womanhood. Youthful impressions may have biassed her judgment; but to her view the cultured Englishman was the finest type of manliness in the world. To make him perfect she only desired that he should worship *nos idéals*. “Our ideals” meant the acceptance of equal rights and privileges for all and the abolition of caste distinctions.

But notwithstanding all her intelligence—perhaps in consequence of it—the woman was a dreamer. The last time I saw her was on the shore of the Lake of Geneva, watching the last paling splendours of the declining day as they tinged the glittering white of the Alps with the hues of the dying dolphin. “When I look on that,” she said, “I dream of the eternal love and of peace. How beautiful they are, those things! *Mais, mon Dieu!* How happy it must be to be a simple little farmer’s wife, and not dream too much of such things!” She was thinking of our friend, the Jura husbandman, with the never-ceas-

ing labour and the ever-present solitude of the hills.

I should like to present another type, but I fear lest my attempt may prove altogether inadequate. He was an officer on the permanent staff of the Swiss army, and had to do with the drilling of recruits, and so forth. I travelled with him once as far as Olten to attend an Old Catholic conference, and as we spent much of two days together, I learned a great deal about his attitude towards the world and things in general. He, too, had his ideal, and a very simple one it was. "Every boy and girl ought to be taught a bread-winning handicraft, to shoot straight (if a boy), to nurse (if a girl), and to know and do their duty to their neighbours and their God." For the rest, he was a true Catholic, albeit opposed to Ultramontanism, which he held to be hostile to the best interests of democracy. *Et le Christianisme—voilà la vraie démocratie!* That was his view—and his political faith.

Elsewhere I have endeavoured to limn in outline two or three governesses. Let me add here the broad general lineaments of a schoolmaster. I met him in a hotel where he was spending his summer vacation. Sitting at the end of the table opposite to me, and being a very grave person, or to all appearance such, I got the idea that he was greatly scandalised at the light talk and frequent laughter that enlightened my end of the table, where we were English, Irish, Dutch, German,

and Russian, rather indiscriminately mixed. If he intervened in the general conversation, it was somewhat heavily and, as one might say, professionally. Finally he left, and as the landlady was regretting his absence, I remarked that we seemed to breathe more freely without him. "Ah," said she, "that is because he is worn out with work. But if you will go with us one day to visit him in the mountains, you will find him very different—so amiable, and so—how do you say it?—so fond of doing nothing with just enough to do to make it comfortable."

A week or so later a party of us drove over to see this schoolmaster in his mountain retreat, and I learned to know him for what he was truly—a man who had almost a passion for the training of the young. Near to where he was lodging there was a house for school-children during the holidays, and it was a picture to see him romping with the small fry in the meadows and upon the hillside. This man had one thought, although he had many ways of expressing it; it was, "The world has not yet learned how malleable childhood is." And he often gave it as his conviction that the time would come when the world would be governed from the nursery and the schoolroom.

By way of contrast let me give the portrait of an hotel-keeper, a woman. Her house is in Geneva, on the northern side of the lake. It does not rank among the first; but it is probably the more comfortable on that account. Anyway, all

who stay in it once want to go again; for Madame is a model hostess, and not only makes her guests comfortable, but takes an interest in each personally. Moreover, she is a good story-teller, and, as a story-teller should be, full of humour. In days long gone her father had kept one of the best hotels in the city, one historically famous, and had thus been brought in contact with many notable men. It was not of these, however, that Madame told her stories, but about the eccentricities who had left their mark upon the hotel. The English "my lord" was a stock character, and it must be confessed she had some amusing stories about him—about his oddities, his forgetfulness, his often querulous tongue, his "cracktness" (if one may coin a word), his generosity, and what not.

A favourite story was that of the nobleman who had told his coachman overnight that they would start for home in the morning—for these reminiscences went back to pre-railway days; but when he appeared at the door to get into his carriage he found the horses' heads turned in the direction as though they were going to Italy. "I told you we were going home," said his lordship to the coachman. "Oh, I beg your pardon, sir!" cried John. "I'll have the horses' heads the other way in half a jiff." "Never mind," replied the nobleman, with the utmost *sang-froid*; "since you have got the horses' heads that way, we will go on to Rome." Another of these amiable maniacs

always dragged his bed on to the floor, and slept there; a still odder variety used to put the dining-room chairs back to back, and play leap-frog over them, to prepare himself for dinner. "Father did not object," observed Madame, with a smile, "because if 'my lord' happened to break one he never objected to paying double what it was worth." These stories were told with infinite gusto, but none tickled the good hostess so much in the telling as the story of the gentleman who, when nearing Paris on his way home from Italy, missed a favourite white beaver, and returned all the way to Geneva, inquiring at every stopping-place, "Have you seen anything of my white hat?" At that place he found that it had been inadvertently crushed into a portmanteau among some soiled linen. But, bruised and rumpled though it was, he clapped it on his head, and set out north again, perfectly happy. "Ah, Monsieur," said Madame, after telling this particularly tall *conte*, "we repeat these things, and amuse ourselves with them; but, all the same, there was no one we liked to receive better than these Englishmen, for, odd as they might be, and crotchety, they were always gentlemen, and that is more than one can say of all who travel about nowadays. I myself saw an English nobleman drive his own carriage to my father's door, while his coachman, who had been taken unwell, sat inside." This woman spoke three languages with equal facility. Two of them, French and German, she called

“ my mother tongues.” As to English, “ that,” she said, “ my father made all his children learn because, as he used to put it, ‘ English spells money.’ ”

I could add many others to these types of character, but one more must suffice. Most persons who have visited Switzerland have made the acquaintance of Alpine guides. It can hardly be said that these men form a class apart, because they are all of peasant origin, and most peasants will on occasion act as guides about their own mountains, which they know *comme ma poche*, as the saying is. But some become more expert in this sort of work than others, and so are better known and more frequently employed. Some, indeed, there are whose names are world-famous, like the brothers Hans and Christian Grass of Pontresina, Alexandre Burgener of Saas, Melchior Andregg of Meiringen, or Mathias Zurbriggen, whose exploits have not been confined to Switzerland, or even Europe. But there are many others equally capable in their calling whose names have not been sounded abroad, but are none the less worthy of such fame, if that could help them or add to their comfort in any way.

There is one trait which characterises most, if not all, of these men. It is their large-heartedness. They are like a providence haunting the most perilous places of the Alps. There is hardly any risk they will not run, scarcely any exposure

they will not endure, to save life or help those in danger or difficulty. The common run of men in East Switzerland give one the impression of being rough and a little hard; but these men, rugged though they are in externals, can be as gentle as women. All who know them are ready to sing their praises in this respect. I remember once three young men, strangers, wandering about in the neighbourhood of Chamouni, and losing their way. Late at night two of them chanced upon a lone hut, in which they found one of these peasant mountaineers. Without a moment's hesitation he set out with one of the young men to fetch their companion, an American student, who, having sprained his ankle, bade the others leave him and seek assistance. It was, perhaps, a small matter for a man of his breadth of shoulder and strength of limb, but it seemed a marvellous thing to those to whom he gave his assistance that he should be able to bear a youth of twenty-two over several miles of rough mountain road, and almost in total darkness. When they were finally landed in an *auberge* the young men made up a sum of twenty francs to reward him for his pains. But he would not accept a sou. "Keep me in your kindly remembrance," said he, "and that will be pay enough."



INDEX

- AARGAU, 32, 233
Abbaye des Vignerons, 112
"Act of Mediation," 32
Ælplerfest, 226, 229
Agriculture, 117
Alcohol, 7, 36, 37, 158
Alemanni, 4
Aletsch glacier, legend of, 143
Allmend, 119
Alpenrösli, 127, 182
Alp-horn, 124
Alpine music, 123
Alpine year, the, 122
Alp-land, 16
Alps, the, 118
Altdorf, 55
Amies de la jeune fille, 88
Appenzell-ausser-Rhoden, 105, 215
Appenzell-inner-Rhoden, 73, 156, 157, 167
Aristocracy, 93, 94
Asses' milk, 49
Assurance, 82

BACK to nature, 249, 260
Basel-land, 115
Bechlin, Auguste, 253
Beer-drinking, 158

Bergsturz, 22

Berne, 31, 52, 53, 136

Bernese Jura, 5

Bernese Oberland, 13, 100, 137, 229

Birds, destruction of, 127

Birds, migration of, 261

Bishoprics, 209

Book-knowledge, 176, 177

Books, gratuitous provision of, in schools, 68

Bund, 31, 32

Bürger, 48, 49

Burgess class, 94

Burgundians, 4

Byron (Lord), 34, 134

CÆSAR, 3

Calvin, 74, 218, 258

Catholics, 56, 64, 67, 72, 149, 155, 156, 161, 164, 166, 211,
214

Cattle-breeding, 117

Cattle (Swiss), 119, 137

Celtic, 3

Chambrier, Alice, 254

Chamois, 16

Character, cantonal, 131 ; Swiss, 257

Chaux de-Fonds, 98, 231

Cheese-making, 117, 128, 205

Cherbuliez, Victor, 252

Chestnuts, 10

Church in Switzerland, 209

Coleridge, 25

Combe, T., 254

Communal Assembly, 48

Commune, 46, 47, 52, 187

Condensed milk industry, 105

Consistory, 72

- Co-operation, 204 *et seq.*
Costumes, 46, 156, 166, 167
Cotton manufacture, 100-102, 104
Cow-bells, 122
Cretinism, 6, 7
Cuisines scolaires, 84
Culture of the vine, 106
Cures, 249

DANCING, 155
Democratic government, 29
"Derbyshire neck," 6
Dialects, 133, 149
Domo d'Ossola, 6
Drama, the rural, 138
Drunkenness, 36

EDUCATION, 9, 61-63, 167, 168, 176, 177
Elm, 21
Embroidery, 102-105
Emmenthal, 117, 137, 227
Engadine, 147-149
Engineers, 18
Entlebuch, 137, 227

FACTORIES, 154
Factory laws, 202
Farmer, Jura, 259
Father Bacchus, 112
Federal Assembly, 43, 44
Federal Council, 44, 45
Federal Pact, 32, 34
Festivals (popular), 221
Festspiel, 237 *et seq.*
Fête des Vignerons, 112
Firn, 24
Flax-spinning, 104

- Flowers (Alpine), 126, 127
 Forest Cantons, 30, 32
 Forests, 18, 19
 Freiburg, 133, 134, 136, 213
 French (language), 4, 34, 93, 132, 244
 Fruit-trees, 175

 GALER, ALBERT, 196
 Game, 16
Gemeinde, 47, 49
 Genva, 76, 97, 115, 132, 195, 201, 210, 218, 231
 Geneva Convention, 88
 German (language), 4, 5, 14, 31, 50, 51
 Glaciers, 20, 24
 Glarus, 5, 21, 31, 54, 55, 94, 205, 222
 Goethe, 33
 Goitre, 6
 "Gospel of work," 82
 Gotthelf, Jeremias, 253
 Governesses (Swiss), 168 *et seq.*
 Grape cure, 249
 Graubünden, 5, 17, 71, 107, 114, 146, 149
 Grisons. *See* Graubünden.
 Grutli Society, 195, 200, 201
 Gruyère, 117, 133, 233
 Guides (Swiss), 271
 Gymnastics, 229, 230

Hackbrett, 156
 Hagenmacher, O., 252
 Heinrichsbad, 249
 Helvetii, 3
 Home life, 160
 Homes (Swiss), 153
Hornus, 229
 Hotel-keepers, 116, 268

Houses (Swiss), 163, 179, 180

Huguenin, Oscar, 254

Huonder, Antoine, 254

Hygiene, 154

INDUSTRY (Swiss), 95-97, 100, 103, 106, 117, 205

Initiative, 39, 42

Insects (Alpine), 127

Intemperance, 7

Italian (language), 4

JAHN, LUDWIG, 230

Jeremias Gotthelf, 253

Jesuits, 34, 210

Jewellery, 97

Jews, 214

"Jodel," 135, 157, 233

Jura farmer, 259

KAISER, ISABELLE, 253

Keller, Gottfried, 138, 246, 251, 253

Kiltgang, the, 137, 165

King (Edward) and sanatoria, 90, 91

Kuhreihen, 134, 135

Kulturkampf, 210

LABOUR colonies, 83

Lace-making, 179

Ladin (*i. e.* Latin) dialect, 149

Lake Constance, 9, 117, 233

Lake Lemán, or Geneva, 10, 34, 107, 117, 258

Lake of Zurich, 115

Landamman, 55-59

Landsgemeinde, 39, 41, 43, 46, 55-59, 195

Landsgemeinde cantons, 54

Landslip, 23

- Landsturm*, 185
Landwehr, 185
Lausanne, 9, 69, 133
Leutboden, 251
Life in the Alps, 118
Life (length of), 7
Lightning, 25
Linen-weaving, 104
Literature, 243 *et seq.*
Locle, 98
Lucerne, 72
Lugano, 232
Lullaby, 180
Luther, 234
Lutheranism, 219

MADRISAHORN, legend of, 150
Maienstecken, 165
Manufacture of machinery, 104
Marmot, 16
Marriage customs, 160 *et seq.*
Methodists, 219
Meyer, C. F., 251
Michelet, 97
Migration of birds, 261
Military system, 184
Milk cures, 77
Monnier, Mark, 252
Montet, Dr., 218
Morgarten, 30
Mount Pilatus, legend of, 138
Music, 234 *et seq.*
Musical-boxes, 97, 99

NÄFELS (battle of), 222
National Council, 44

- National industry, 93
- Neuchâtel, 98, 218
- Newspapers (Swiss), 244 *et seq.*
- OLD Catholics, 211-213
- Olivier, Juste, 252
- PEASANT, the Swiss, 119
- People's Bank, 204
- Pestalozzi, 62
- Philanthropic work, 78-80, 89
- Pilatus (Mount), legend of, 138
- Polytechnic, 36, 74, 75
- Popular *fêtes*, 221
- Poverty, 96
- Press, 243 *et seq.*
- Productive land, area of, 16
- Protestants, 60, 71, 72, 132, 148, 155, 156, 161, 162, 214
215
- Public education, 61
- Public Utility, Society of, 79, 81, 84
- Ranz des Vaches*, 123, 134
- Reclus, Elisée, 154
- Red Cross Society, 87, 88
- Referendum, 39, 42, 68
- Republican manners, 159
- Revision (of Constitution), 35
- Rhæti, 3, 32, 255
- Rhætia, 5
- Ribbon-weaving, 103
- Roads, 26
- Rod Edouard, 133
- Roget, François, 250
- Romance dialects, 133
- Romans, 3
- Romansch, 5, 149

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 27, 62, 252
Rumbold, Sir Horace, 62
Rural exodus, 122, 125, 130

ST. JAKOB, battle of, 114
Sanatoria, 90, 91
Sand, Georges, 168
Schabzieger, 205
Schaffhausen, 114, 115, 231
Schiller, 33
School, 67, 68, 176-178
Schoolmaster (Swiss), 267
Schützenfeste, 224, 225
Schweizer Blut, 114
Schwingfeste, 227
Schwyz, 8, 166
Seippel, M., 62
Senn (cowherd), life of, 127
Shoe-making, 104
Shooting, 191
Silk manufacture, 100, 101
Simmenthal, 115, 137
Social Democrats, 200, 204
Soleure Jura, 99
Sovereign rights, 37
Sovereignty of the people, 29
Spitteler, Charles, 252
Sports, 228, 229
Straw-plaiting, 103, 105
Struggle with nature, 12
Sunday labour, 202
Suttermeister, O., 252
Swiss army, 184
Swiss children, 173, 179, 180
Swiss girls, 154, 155, 181
Swiss songs, 123, 124

Swiss women, 152, 153, 167
Synod (Protestant), 216, 217

TAVERNS, 157, 160

Tell, William, 31, 33, 191

Temperance, 158

Tessin, 4, 5, 32, 114, 115, 145, 146

Thurgau, 32, 115

Ticino, 4, 145

Tir Federal, 191, 223, 240

Tissot, Victor, 247

Tobacco industry, 105

Toepffer, Rodolph, 252

Trychlen, 122

Tyndall (Professor), 23

Types (Swiss), 257 *et seq.*

ULTRAMONTANES, 211, 212, 215

Unit of political life, 47

Universities, 36, 70, 74, 213, 217, 230, 231

Unterwalden, 110, 166

Uri, 30, 73

VACATION colonies, 77

Valais, 6, 71, 108, 115, 125, 141, 142

Vaud, 76, 110, 113, 132, 133, 197, 210, 218

Vegetation (Alpine), 125

Vine, culture of, 106 *et seq.*

Vintage, 111

Viticulture in Tessin, 110

Vogt, Carl, 74, 146

Volkslieder, 22

Voralpen, 10

WATCH-MAKING, 97, 98

Wealth, 95

Whey cure, 249

- Wine-making, 106 *et seq.*
Women, work of, 121 ; Swiss, 152
Wood-carving, 99
Woollen manufacture, 104
Working-men's societies, 195, 200, 201
Workmen (Swiss), 195
Wrestling, 136, 226, 228
Wülsch cantons, 51, 94, 153

ZSCHOKKE, 250
Zug, 31, 41
Zurich, 53, 54, 68, 71, 219
Zurich Oberland, 100-102



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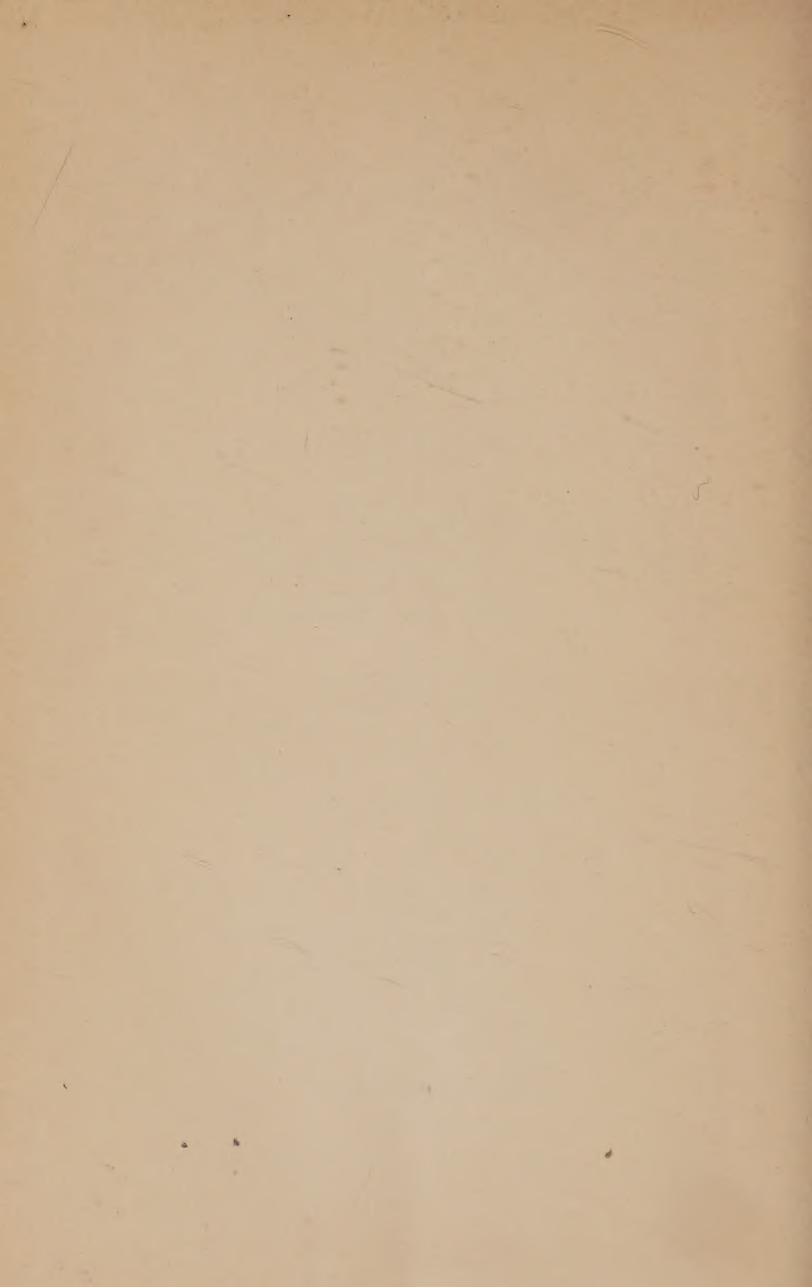
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